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Antar a bedoueen romance

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ANTAR.

A SEDUCED ROMANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC.

ANTAR.

PART THE FIRST.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, 15, N. B. STREET,  
LONDON.  
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**ANTAR,**  
**A BEDOUEEN ROMANCE.**

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TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC,

BY

**TERRICK HAMILTON, ESQ.**

ORIENTAL SECRETARY TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT  
CONSTANTINOPLE.

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PART THE FIRST.

VOL. I.

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**LONDON:**

**JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.**

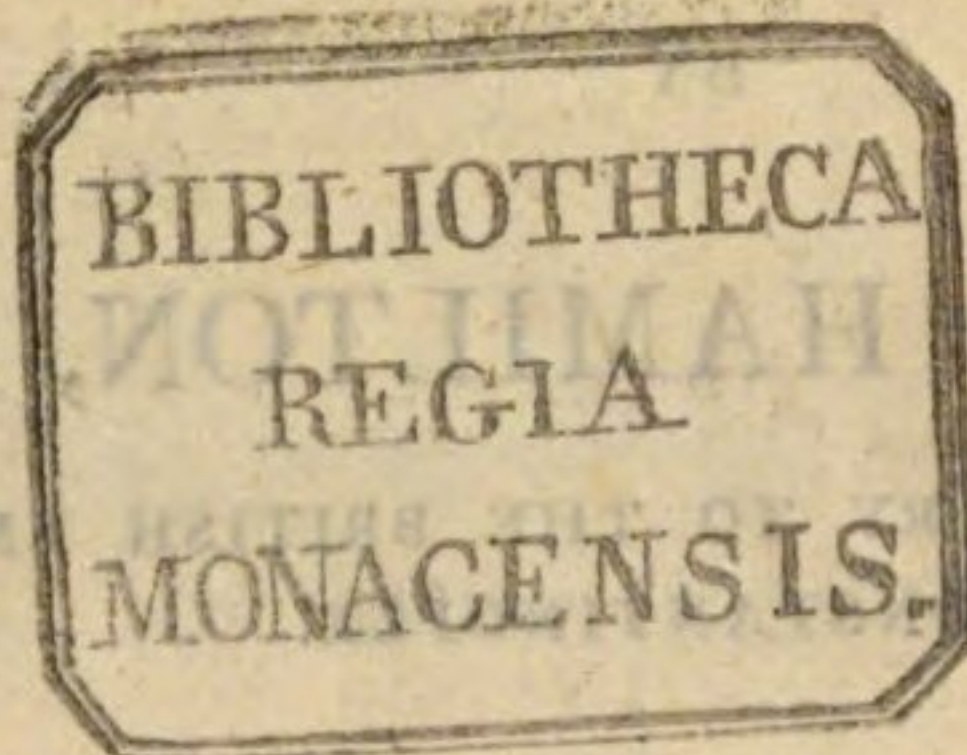
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THE

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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OF the inhabitants of Arabia, previous to the time of Mohommed, little is known; and, as far as relates to their public history and government, that small portion given to us by Abulfeda by no means strengthens our wishes to obtain any further details.

In the absence of any system of civilization, prescription, or rather the will of a chief, was law, either esteemed as such or enforced. Subject to no other control, and under the guidance of their heroes or kings, the tribes carried on wars and made predatory incursions under various pretences; sometimes merely to relieve their present wants by capturing the flocks and herds of neighbouring hordes (such depre-



dations being called gains); at others, with a view to gratify their revenge for any real or imaginary outrage, where retaliation had been delayed only to render it more certain, when the opportunity for attack might be attended with less danger, or their force sufficiently powerful to ensure success.

This period is called the “Time of Ignorance,” by subsequent writers, in contradistinction to the enlightened state in which they suppose themselves to have lived since the introduction of Islamism.

The Arabians, whether descended from Ishmael or from Cahtan (Yoctan), were divided into two sorts, the one living in towns, the other in tents. The former subsisted on the produce of their flocks, by tillage, and even by the exercise of trades. The latter had their pastures, their principal food was camel’s flesh, its milk was their usual drink, though wine was also a liquor in which they indulged to the greatest excess. By waylaying travellers and caravans, or invading their neighbours’



possessions, they increased their precarious means, often changing their place of residence in quest of better pasturage or a greater abundance of water, according to the seasons; avoiding in their course tribes more powerful than themselves, and overpowering the weak and unprotected. This habit of life more particularly applies to the descendants of Ishmael, or rather Adnan; for as the genealogy from Ishmael to Adnan is involved in obscurity, the Arabs to the north of Yemen or Arabia Felix term themselves Adnanians; the Arabs of the Jewish or Christian persuasion chiefly residing in Syria and its confines. The learning of a people so constituted must of course have been very narrow and circumscribed. They could boast of a slight knowledge in the stars, so as to foretel the changes of the weather, and to interpret dreams.

The grossest idolatry was their religion: images under various forms and names, the sun, the moon, or some particular constel-



lation, were the objects of their worship ; though many tribes looked up to a Supreme Being, and only deemed the planets or idols as mediators with the Divinity at the final resurrection. Some did not believe in a future state ; but those who had any vague notion on the subject imagined that the dead, upon whose tombs a camel was slaughtered, should rise mounted on its back, but those for whom this ceremony should not be performed, would be called to judgment on foot.

Mecca was at all times held in the highest veneration, as the place where Abraham and Ishmael had dwelt ; the Caaba is believed to have been erected by them ; and as such, was the object of a holy pilgrimage, attended with most of the ceremonies in practice at the present day.

The genealogical descent of families, and the history of their nobility, were attended to with the most scrupulous jealousy. But the accomplishments on which they most chiefly prided themselves were,



a perfect knowledge of their language, skill in arms, and hospitality to strangers.

“ The first they exercised themselves  
“ in by composing orations and poems.  
“ Their orations were of two sorts, metrical  
“ and prosaic ; the one being compared to  
“ pearls strung, and the other to loose ones.  
“ They endeavoured to excel in both, and  
“ whoever was able in assembly to per-  
“ suade the people to a great enterprise,  
“ or dissuade them from a dangerous one,  
“ or gave them other wholesome advice,  
“ was honoured with the title of Khatib, or  
“ orator, which is now given to the Ma-  
“ hommedan preachers. They pursued a  
“ method very different from that of the  
“ Greek or the Roman orators ; their sen-  
“ tences being like loose gems, without con-  
“ nexion, so that this sort of composition  
“ struck the audience chiefly by the fulness  
“ of the periods, the elegance of the ex-  
“ pression, and the acuteness of the pro-  
“ verbial sayings ; and so persuaded were  
“ they of their excellency in this way, that



“ they would not allow any nation to under-  
“ stand the art of speaking in public, except  
“ themselves and the Persians ; which last  
“ were reckoned much inferior, in that  
“ respect, to the Arabians. Poetry was in so  
“ great esteem among them, that it was a  
“ great accomplishment and a proof of inge-  
“ nuous extraction for any one to be able to  
“ express himself in verse with ease and ele-  
“ gance on any extraordinary occurrence ;  
“ and even in their common discourse they  
“ made frequent applications of celebrated  
“ passages of their famous poets. In their  
“ poems were preserved the distinctions of  
“ descents, the rights of tribes, the memory  
“ of great actions, and the propriety of their  
“ language, for which reasons an excellent  
“ poet reflected an honour on his tribe ;  
“ so that, as soon as any one began to be  
“ admired for his performances of this  
“ kind in a tribe, the other tribes sent  
“ publicly to congratulate them on the  
“ occasion ; and themselves made enter-  
“ tainments, at which the women assisted,



“ dressed in their nuptial ornaments, sing-  
“ ing, to the sound of timbrels, the happiness  
“ of their tribe, who had one now to pro-  
“ tect their honour, to preserve their genea-  
“ logies and the purity of their language,  
“ and to transmit their actions to posterity ;  
“ for this was all performed by their poems,  
“ to which they were solely obliged for  
“ their knowledge and instructions, moral  
“ and economical, and to which they had  
“ recourse as to an oracle, in all doubts and  
“ differences. No wonder then that a public  
“ congratulation was made on this account,  
“ which honour they were so far from  
“ making cheap, that they never did it but  
“ on one of these three occasions, which were  
“ reckoned great points of felicity, viz. on  
“ the birth of a boy, the rise of a poet, or  
“ the fall of a foal of generous breed. To  
“ keep an emulation among their poets,  
“ the tribes had, once a year, a general  
“ assembly at Ocadh, a place famous on this  
“ account, and where they kept a weekly  
“ mart, or fair, which was held on Sunday.



“ This annual meeting lasted a whole  
“ month, during which time they employed  
“ themselves, not only in trading, but in  
“ repeating their poetical compositions,  
“ contending and vying with each other  
“ for the prize, whence the place, it is said,  
“ took its name\*. The poems that were  
“ judged to excel were laid up in the  
“ king’s treasuries, as were the seven cele-  
“ brated poems, thence called Moallacat,  
“ rather than from being hung up on the  
“ Caaba, which honour they also had by  
“ public order, being written on Egyptian  
“ silk, and in letters of gold ; for which  
“ reason they had also the name of Mod-  
“ hahabat, or the golden verses.

“ The fair and assembly at Ocadh were  
“ suppressed by Mohammed, in whose time,  
“ and for some years after, poetry seems to  
“ have been neglected by the Arabs, who  
“ were then employed in their conquests,  
“ which being completed, and themselves

\* The original Arabic root Akdh, signifies, subduing  
or contending.



“ at peace, not only this study was revived,  
“ but almost all sorts of learning were  
“ encouraged and greatly improved by  
“ them. This interruption, however, oc-  
“ casioned the loss of most of their ancient  
“ pieces of poetry, which were then chiefly  
“ preserved by memory ; the use of writing  
“ being rare among them in their time of  
“ ignorance. Though the Arabs were so  
“ early acquainted with poetry, they did  
“ not at first use to write poems of a just  
“ length, but only expressed themselves in  
“ verse occasionally, nor was their prosody  
“ digested into rules till some time after  
“ Mahommed.

“ The exercise of arms and horseman-  
“ ship they were obliged to practise and  
“ encourage, by reason of the independence  
“ of their tribes, whose frequent jarrings  
“ made wars almost continual ; and they  
“ chiefly ended their disputes in field battles ;  
“ it being an usual saying among them,  
“ that God had bestowed four peculiar  
“ things on the Arabs ; that their turbans



“ should be to them instead of diadems,  
“ their tents instead of walls and houses,  
“ their swords instead of entrenchments,  
“ and their poems instead of written laws.

“ Hospitality was so habitual to them,  
“ and so much esteemed, that the examples  
“ of this kind among them exceed what  
“ can be produced from other nations.

“ Nor were those the only good qualities  
“ of the Arabs ; they are commended by  
“ the ancients for being most exact in their  
“ words, and respectful to their kindred ;  
“ and they have always been celebrated  
“ for their quickness of apprehension and  
“ penetration, and the vivacity of their wit,  
“ especially those of the desert.

“ As the Arabs have their excellencies,  
“ so have they, like other nations, their  
“ defects and vices. Their own writers  
“ acknowledge that they have a natural  
“ disposition to war, bloodshed, cruelty,  
“ and rapine ; being so much addicted to  
“ bear malice that they scarce ever forget  
“ an old grudge ; which vindictive temper,



“ some physicians say, is occasioned by  
“ their frequent feeding on camel’s flesh,  
“ (the ordinary food of the Arabs of the  
“ desert, who are therefore observed to be  
“ most inclined to these vices) that crea-  
“ ture being most malicious and tenacious  
“ of anger.”

Such is the language in which the learned translator of the Coran has delivered to the public his account of the character of the Arabians, as gathered from the writings of Abulfeda, Pococke, and others. That the Arabs of those days thus thought and thus acted is founded on the concurrence of such respectable authority, that the authenticity of this statement has never been questioned; but as the application of such a system of habits and manners to the practice of common life has been hitherto unknown, it is with a view of exhibiting to the world a stronger proof of the truth of this recorded evidence, that the translation of the history of Antar is now for the first time submitted to the public; a work



which represents, with the utmost detail, the most faithful narrative of that mode of life in all its variety, whether public or domestic, which prevailed among the Arabs in that "period of ignorance," and which, with some material shades of difference, is stated, by modern travellers, to exist among the numerous tribes that inhabit the deserts at this day.

It would be interesting as a fact in literary history, could we trace, with any certainty, the source whence the materials which furnished the basis of this romance were drawn, that it might be ascertained how far historical evidence may be cited to authenticate the different events, and how far they were only subjects of oral tradition, down to the period when they were committed to writing by Asmaee, during the reign of Haroon Rasheed.

From D'Herbelot we learn that, at the court of that monarch, Asmaee was celebrated as the author of several works on Arabic grammar and theology; that he



was one of the most learned men of the age, and in great consideration with Haroon himself, who used to listen with delight to the traditions of the ancient Arabs, with which Asmaee's memory seems to have been most happily stored, and which he narrated in the presence of the assembled doctors, sometimes with such detail and unwearied diligence, as to call forth the animadversion of that prince, who would request him not to overpower him with such continued demands on his attention.

In order to affix more authority to this anecdote, it will not be irrelevant to mention that, in the course of this tale, Asmaee once breaks the thread of his narrative to state, that as he was relating before Haroon and his courtiers one of Antar's astonishing exploits, both the monarch and the ministers joined in expressing their doubts of the truth of such tremendous powers, and even ventured to question the probability of the leading subjects of his story. Asmaee faces these objections, asserting



that every fact rested on undoubted authority, and that the story was a perfect picture of manners existing at that time; and moreover (to place all further hesitation beyond dispute), he boldly states, that he himself had witnessed many of the scenes he so forcibly describes, saying, that he was then four hundred years of age, and had consequently been alive long before the coming of Mohommed.

What could be the object of this extraordinary falsehood (for it is frequently repeated, and some of his heroes are also mentioned as having reached that patriarchal age), is difficult to imagine; however, the general points of the narrative are not to be invalidated by so bold an impossibility; and it may be presumed that the tale, as it now stands, comprises every tradition that he deemed worthy of notice, either as matter of history or of amusement. Some of the facts are to be found in Abulfeda as known causes of troubles and dissensions among the tribes, but still with some change



of circumstance that may be either attributed to those errors incidental to all traditional history, or to the liveliness of the imagination of the author, who may have wished to render his tale more consonant to the taste of the times, by sacrificing the dry detail of an uninteresting fact, to the pleasure of engaging the attention of his audience or his readers\*.

Haroon Rasheed, who flourished during the second century of the hegira, was, of course, the contemporary of Charlemagne: already was the communication open between the courts of Asia and Europe, and mutual presents had evinced the wish of the monarchs to establish an intercourse between the two countries.

It is, therefore, no matter of doubt, that

\* It is also proper to mention, that the names of Johainah and Aboo Obeidah frequently occur with the name of Asmaee, as the compilers of this narrative, in the course of which there are continual breaks: as thus, Asmaee said, or Johainah and Aboo Obeidah said, and then the narrative continues.



this romance was composed or compiled at that period; and that it was a book highly esteemed seems equally notorious. It is, however, a very surprising circumstance that, from that time almost down to the present century, no orientalist of Europe should have mentioned its existence. Asia possesses men of ingenuity and talents, who have, with infinite labour, made commentaries on those books, generally considered as objects of research; but Haji Calfa, the most celebrated of the bibliographers of Asia, only cursorily mentions it.

The most natural way of accounting for this omission is to suppose, that as this book exclusively related to the Arabs of the Desert, unconnected with those men of literature, whose habits and pursuits led them to prefer a residence in cities and at courts, it may, in the course of time, have been entirely lost to the learned readers, and only felt and admired amongst the hordes and tribes, whose manners it so accurately described, and whose energies



and passions it was so well calculated to awaken, in the perusal of those records of the intrepidity of their forefathers. Thus it may have been so long neglected, till it was at last forgotten ; still, however, cherished by those who could understand its value, and engraven in the hearts and the memories of men, who might boast as being the descendants of heroes and warriors, whose glories made them pant after martial fame, and roused them, if not to imitate, at least not to discredit the celebrity of their progenitors, who had lived honoured and renowned, and whose splendid histories and deaths would survive to remotest ages, recorded by the pen of so devoted and enthusiastic an admirer of their exploits, and so capable of transmitting them to the latest posterity, in such glowing and animating description.

Even at this period, Antar, as the hero of this romance, or Asmaee, as the reporter of his deeds, are but little known beyond



the Deserts, and the towns of Aleppo, Damascus, Bagdad, and Cairo. To the Arabs, it is their standard work, which excites in them the wildest emotions; even read by some, firm in the memory of others; but listened to with avidity by all\*.

In Aleppo it is highly valued, particularly by the Armenians; and, in coffee-houses, it is read aloud by some particular person, who keeps a sheet in his hand, to which he occasionally refers to refresh his memory. It is given to children, who are obliged to copy it out, and thus acquire the habit of speaking elegantly and correctly; and it may be attributed to this cause, that the copies of *Antar* are generally found written most execrably ill, and abounding in errors of every kind.

\* Mr. Burkardt, in a letter to the translator, mentions that when he was reading a portion of it to the Arabs, they were in ecstasies of delight, but at the same time so enraged at his erroneous pronunciation, that they actually tore the sheets out of his hands.



Until the publication of the “*Mines de l’Orient*,” printed at Vienna, in 1802, the name of Antar had scarcely been heard in Europe. A copy of the work is in the Imperial Library; and in the *Catalogue raisonné* of the Books written by M. Hammer, there is some account of this romance; from which the following is extracted :

“This work, which must be reckoned  
“as very instrumental towards learning  
“the manners, dispositions, and habits of  
“the Arabs, seems to us more interesting  
“than the celebrated ‘*Thousand and One*  
“*Nights* ;’ not indeed with respect to the  
“fictions, in which this work almost en-  
“tirely fails; but as a picture of true  
“history. There is nothing about genii,  
“magicians, or talismans, or fabulous  
“animals; and if, indeed, the bravery of  
“the hero, who, unwounded, slays hun-  
“dreds and thousands of the foe, or the  
“swiftness of his generous steed, that  
“outstrips the wind, appear incredible;  
“these are rather the results of a hyper-



“bolical style, than to be considered as  
“fabulous figures, which never, in the  
“opinion of orientals, invalidates the truth  
“of history. The whole of this work may  
“be esteemed as a faithful account of the  
“principal tribes of the Arabs, and par-  
“ticularly of the tribe of Abs, from which  
“sprung Antar, in the time of Nushirvan,  
“King of Persia, more faithful in painting  
“manners than in describing events.  
“The style is often flowery and beauti-  
“ful, mixed with poetry, frequently in a  
“common diction, and sometimes the aug-  
“mentations and more recent interpola-  
“tions plainly prove the adulterations of  
“the copyist. (What would that light of  
“oriental literature, Sir William Jones, have  
“thought of the style and merits of this  
“work, who only treated of the fourteenth  
“volume, in his Commentaries on Asiatic  
“Poetry\*.) It chiefly treats of the love of

\* “I have only seen the fourteenth volume of this  
“work, which comprises all that is elegant and noble



“ Antar and Ibla, and also of their family,  
“ down to the death of the hero.

“ This work, which is generally called  
“ a romance of chivalry, though impossible  
“ to be translated, owing to the number  
“ of volumes, may be gleaned ; every part  
“ appertaining to be history, should be  
“ carefully collected, and nothing relative  
“ to manners omitted. Such, with God’s  
“ help, we intend to publish.

“ The author, from beginning to the  
“ end, appears to be Asmaee, a famous  
“ philologist and poet at the court of Ha-  
“ roon Rasheed ; but sometimes other au-  
“ thors and sources are mentioned, who,  
“ according to our opinion, appear to have  
“ been inserted by the story-teller in the  
“ coffee-houses. This is the work, and  
“ not, as is generally supposed, the Thou-  
“ sand and One Nights, which is the source  
“ of the stories which fill the tents and  
“ in composition. So lofty, so various, and so bold is  
“ its style, that I do not hesitate to rank it amongst  
“ the most finished poems.”—*Sir W. Jones.*



“cottages in Arabia and Egypt; though  
“materials are often supplied from other  
“works\* of the same kind.”

The above engaged the attention of persons interested in oriental literature, and copies have been demanded, but are with difficulty procured, owing to the unwillingness of those, who live by reading the stories in the coffee-houses, to part with them; and the expense of transcribing is very heavy.

The translation, now made public, was undertaken from a copy procured at Aleppo, by the kind exertions of Mr. Barker. It proved to be a very valuable work, being comprised in a smaller form than any other

\* The possessors of copies are—

1. Mr. Rich, at Bagdad.
2. M. d'Italinsky.
3. M. Aidé, at Constantinople.
4. Lord Aberdeen.
5. Imperial Library at Vienna.
6. Cambridge Library.

Some few volumes in the possession of Mr. Hamilton.

The Translator has two.

Some of them are imperfect.



as yet sent to Europe. In general, the copies are bound up in numerous volumes of various sizes, from forty to twenty or less, exhibiting a mass to appal the most enterprising of translators, well aware, as he must be, that whatever his determination might effect in making a translation of so ponderous a work, he could not expect any corresponding success in printing it for general perusal.

This difficulty, and the still greater difficulty of abridging a work of so curious a texture, must have prevented any one, acquainted with its merits, from venturing on so arduous a task; and not till the translator saw it in so compressed a shape, did he ever anticipate the possibility of putting it into English.

Whilst he was engaged on the work, he had the advantage of receiving from Mr. Burkardt a letter, in which he accounted for the abridged state of that copy of *Antar*, stating that the voluminous work had been curtailed of many of its repetitions and



much of its poetry, by some learned inhabitants of Syria, and was therefore called the Shamiyeh, or Syrian Antar, in contradistinction to the original large work, which was called the Hijaziyeh, or Arabian Antar.

Mr. Burkardt strongly urged the translator to persist in his undertaking, by adhering strictly to the abridgement; anticipating the most complete success, and even a popularity equal to that so long enjoyed by the Arabian Nights, "to which," he adds, "it is in every respect superior."

Under these inducements, and prompted by the active encouragement of his friends, the translator executed the task from the abridged copy, which even in its reduced state bears too formidable an appearance to attract universal favour.

The translation has been completed some time, and already has one volume met the approbation of those who would kindly hope that his time has not been mis-spent. For the appearance of that volume in its mutilated state, the only apology to be



offered is the indulgent curiosity of friends, who expressed a wish to see that portion in print, before any further addition had reached England. Whether such publication was ill-timed, or whether the continuation might not have been suppressed altogether, must be decided by the future reception this part of the work will meet from the public.

Of the merits of this romance, as a work to be tried by European critics, and ideas founded on principles totally unknown to the Arabian author, it will be no easy task to form a correct judgment. A person, unacquainted with oriental literature, must frame his opinions on rules by which he has been accustomed to regulate his opinions on matters of taste—such a critic must unavoidably err in any decision he may express. On the other hand, an oriental scholar is generally too biassed in favour of languages that have cost him years of unremitting toil to attain, to view, with a mind sufficiently calm and



unprepossessed, a work which, in an Asiatic country, is considered as the standard of perfection. It is true, an orientalist must imbibe some new ideas of taste, before he can judge at all of the merits of an original Asiatic composition, but whether he will be an impartial critic is very doubtful.

That a translator of so immense a work must have felt a more than common gratification in his labours, is evident; otherwise he could never have persisted in the continuance of it; unless it may be presumed that a person, obstinately persevering in an undertaking against his conviction, will in time become so full of his subject, as to see beauties where none exist, and become so much an Asiatic, as to forget he had ever been an European, either in habits or taste.

Leaving, therefore, the public to form their opinions of this tale, through the uncertain medium of a translation (only begging it may be borne in mind, that the original may possess beauties, the trans-



lator may have omitted or overlooked, and that the translation, whenever approved, by no means does justice to the original), he will endeavour to give some succinct account of the object and nature of the work, that the unprejudiced reader may have some clue by which he may form his own opinion of its merits and defects.

Antar, as has been already observed by the editor of the first volume, is no imaginary person: he is well known as a celebrated warrior, and as the author of one of the seven poems suspended on the Caaba at Mecca. His intrepidity is often mentioned by Abulfeda, as being the subject of poetry: though it does not appear that any precise composition relating to his feats in arms is extant, some detached pieces may have survived; still it must be supposed that oral tradition alone has commemorated in verse, current among succeeding generations, those various proofs of heroism which Asmaee afterwards embodied in his work. That he was the son



of Shedad, an Absian chief, is also well attested; though it does not so clearly appear that he was born of a slave-woman.

It is not to be understood, that Asmaee merely intended to compose a faithful history of those times: his view seems rather to comprise in a pleasing tale\*, numerous isolated facts, and the most striking traits of the manners and usages prevalent at that period; and therefore we may presume, that he has embellished his narrative with every additional circumstance that could possibly throw an interest over his hero, or attract the attention of his readers.

And that he has succeeded among those for whom the work was composed, there cannot be the smallest doubt. It is also true, that many, who at this day have read it in the original, have expressed the delight and unwearied admiration they have felt in the perusal of its endless volumes.

\* Historic facts as they occur, when any authority can be quoted, will be observed in the progress of the work.



It may be assumed, that it is one of the most ancient books of Arabian literature, composed during the second century of the Hejirah, at a time when the arts were most successfully cultivated amongst the Asiatic conquerors, and encouraged more particularly under the influence of the Arab princes of Bagdad. Its language is therefore uncommonly pure, equally remote from the harshness of the earlier, or the conceits of the later authors; and when we consider that it was originally written in the Cufic character, and has for a thousand years been transcribed chiefly for the use of the Bedoweens, and often by persons who probably did not comprehend one word they were writing, it is a matter of surprise, how it has retained so much purity and correctness. Some few Persian and Turkish words, subject to Arabic inflexions, are now and then to be observed. Some other modern terms may also have been inserted; these are corruptions, and Mr. Hammer thinks that many interpolations have been made by the copyist.



Words often occur which are not to be found in any dictionary; and some expressions there are, which, though current to this day among the Arabs of the Desert, are not susceptible of the same acceptation in any lexicon.

The style of the work as a composition is very plain and easy in construction; but abounding in an endless variety of diction, couched in the most choice and appropriate terms. The sentences are short, much in the style of the Bible; the prose is even in rhythm throughout, continuing uninterrupted but by a change of termination, according to the powers of the author, or the redundancy of expressions with the same sound\*. Thus, with short rhythmical periods of various lengths, the author proceeds, for five or six lines, to the end of his subject, and then recommences other matter with a different rhyme. This is particularly striking in all his descriptions

\* This is reckoned the greatest beauty in oriental compositions.



of battles, where the pauses are very frequent, all with the same terminations; the periods being often formed of only two words, sometimes of three, and thus hurrying on, with apparent rapidity and great variety and spirit, throughout a whole page.

This species of composition produces the necessity of continued repetitions; and though Asmaee has proved that his memory was supplied with an infinity of expression, unrivalled by any oriental author, yet the frequent recurrence of similar scenes and thoughts must of course occasion such repetitions, as almost to weary his warmest admirers; but when translated into another tongue, that admits of, comparatively speaking, no diversity of terms to express the same meaning, they become most tedious and disgusting.

The poetry has the charm of a more elevated style; and a wider range for the imagination has been eagerly seized by the poet. Infinitely more difficult in its construction, it is still natural, and devoid of



those conceits and absurdities that abound in almost all Asiatic compositions. It comprises every variety to which poetry is applied. The heroic, the complimentary, the laudatory, the amatory, the ludicrous, the merry, and the elegiac, are all combined in the utmost profusion; even the pastoral is not omitted. A specimen of this species of poetry occurs that is perfectly unique in the language: the translator never met with any thing of the kind. Moreover, on inquiry among some learned Musulmans, he could not understand that such compositions were at all known or appreciated among them. It is in the style of an eclogue, and is introduced as a trial of skill amongst revellers at a feast. Besides its originality, it has great merit as an oriental composition, abounding in terms never before modelled into grammatical inflection, and which excited the most unfeigned admiration and surprise amongst some natives of Constantinople, to whom these verses were shown.



The heroic is, of course, a mixture of all that is bold in imagery and inflated in expression; exaggeration and personal vanity run throughout the whole; perhaps these are the legitimate characteristics of such poetry: certainly we have the highest authority for its currency, in a poet whose writings are considered as the standard for whatever is grand and majestic in that species of poetical composition.

The elegiac has drawn tears from persons, whose sympathy and tenderness were fashioned to be roused by such scenes as are described in this work, and are therefore as true to nature as those feelings which are recognized in a more refined state of society.

The ludicrous and satirical are in some instances too gross, often indelicate, but not obscene. There is something pretty and original in the amatory style; and the merry can move to mirth in its innocence and playfulness. As to the complimentary,



it is, as is the case in all languages, the least entitled to commendation, abounding in ridiculous conceits and unintelligible panegyric.

With respect to the magic and enchantments that occur in the work, it may be proper to add, for the benefit of those who indulge in the still controverted point of the birth-place of sorcery, that instances are to be found of supernatural agency; though in the portion now published no mention is made of any such influence over the minds and actions of the heroes who figure in the story. The belief that ghosts, or hobgoblins, or genii, inhabited some peculiar spot, generally prevailed; and we perceive that Shiboob, Antar's brother, is often taken for one of those august personages, owing to the rapidity with which he transfers himself from place to place.

The effects of an amulet ring, first worn by a Christian warrior, who at his death bequeaths it to Antar, in relieving a per-



son from fits, are noticed more than once. Sorceresses were also sufficiently celebrated, even at that distant period, to be here recorded, more for the iniquities than for the good they were called upon to perform. One endeavours to inveigle Ibla to her destruction, by means of two dæmon emissaries she employs, and a magic fire she kindles. Another fortifies her castle with the illusion of supernatural flames and smoke; whilst the sister of this wicked enchantress dispels these seeming horrors by her more potent spells. But, though this latter is married in consequence, to one of the Absian chiefs, she is absolutely prohibited from ever practising her magical arts, before the marriage could be solemnized. It is thus evident, that this engine of destruction was regarded as abominable, and by no means connected with any acknowledged source of resistance.

Allusions to genii frequently occur: one of Antar's sons is slain by them. They are described as most hideous monsters,



having their eyes slit upwards, and uttering most terrific sounds. Antar restores to the human form one of the genii who had been metamorphosed into a horse; and, in return, he aids his deliverer in avenging his son's murder.

Besides these instances, there are some other events of minor consequence, where magic is supposed to effect its purposes; and it may be inferred, that the author has rather for his object to give some account of the general notions respecting sorcery and magic, at the period to which the story relates, than to afford an accurate detail of its influence on the public mind, during the reign of Haroon Rasheed, at which time, though its delusions may not have gained actual belief, yet as the machinery of a tale, it was reckoned indispensably necessary.

Antar's sword is certainly of original manufacture; and, though not enchanted, may be cited by the side of Durindana. Indian blades, Davidean armour, and Aad-



ite\* casques are invested with all the properties of magic weapons, whether of offence or defence.

No warrior appears with a skin impervious to the sword's edge. There is, however, one hero, who is a mass of bone, and no arm but Antar's can strike a blow to crush so miraculous a production. Others are also designated under the formidable appellation of earth-rakers; thus called from their immense stature, so that, when on horseback, their feet tore up the ground; and others are denominated ear-strippers, others liver-eaters, &c.

The frequent allusion to dragons and sea-monsters in the poetry, and in the description of assailing heroes, proves that, in those days, the introduction of fabulous animals, distinct from those mentioned in Persian books, was considered a legiti-

\* So called, either because they had endured from the time of the tribe of Aad, or as being very ancient, they bore that distinction to testify their antiquity and durability.



mate embellishment in romantic fiction. But the only animal whose appearance is mentioned is the cameleopard\*, which is described as a beast of burthen, employed to carry a huge giant, as no other animal was sufficiently powerful to bear so vast a weight. But as it is ascertained that the cameleopard is not a beast of burthen, it may safely be presumed, that though its existence had been proved, its distinctive qualities were unknown.

And thus, with all the paraphernalia of chivalrous equipment, heroes come forth, not only in fields of battle or single combat, but also at marriages and entertainments, merely for trials of skill in arms in the midst of a course, to tilt and joust with barbless spears in the presence of kings and chiefs, who proclaim the merits

\* It is called in Arabic, Jirafah, whence comes the Spanish Girafa, and the French Giraffe; thus rendering it probable, that though the animal is exclusively of African origin, it only became known in Europe through the Arabs.



of the victor and the vanquished, sometimes distributing prizes, or awarding a contested point, or even deciding the fate of some damsel, the object of amorous contention between two devoted champions ; and not unfrequently do these combats, which commence innocently, end in bloodshed.

It is also worthy of remark, that these chiefs, when bound on a marauding enterprise, often meet with extraordinary adventures ; sometimes forlorn maidens, whose distresses they relieve, or matrons, whose husbands and sons have been slain, and even heroes of inferior stamp, whose cause they will adopt, and thus either soften his sorrows, or die in his defence. It must be acknowledged, that they sometimes take advantage of the unprotected state to which females are reduced, when their attendants have resisted the assaults of a stranger ; but instances of the purest generosity, and the most chivalrous sentiments of honour and decency will often mark their acts,



and induce us to marvel, how nations so barbarous in blood could ever be melted into pity and tenderness.

Miracles of a sublimer nature, such as storms, and timely aid in the extremest perils, and visitations of extraordinary import, are attributed to the proper source of such interventions. The Almighty is here the sole actor: his influence is ever unquestioned. It is not often invoked, neither does it often appear; thus rendering it the more efficacious, and creating corresponding sentiments of awe and gratitude in the minds of those who may be either its victims, or the objects of its favour.

The name of Mohommed is used more than once as the instrument of divine vengeance, at the moment he was supposed to have been born; but at whose breast he was inhaling life was unknown: his name had been alone revealed, and the first mention of it infuses so great dread into the Persian army, that they are instantly routed; the name of Mohommed



seeming to rise from every pebble, and from every grain of sand. His infant cries are also stated as the means of working a great miracle, in a second destruction of the Persians.

Such are the people and the manners this book purposes to describe, a subject never before attempted, either by Asiatic or European : a subject that has hitherto been supposed devoid of all interest, and certainly considered as susceptible of no variety. A nation of shepherds, dwelling in tents, surrounded by deserts, appears at first sight, as the very antipodes of those nations whose usages and habits have supplied matter for romance and historic fiction. In minds thus savagely constituted, where could love dwell? Where could courtesy, discretion, and those nameless decencies and distinctions, persons of cultivated manners can only feel and express, find a place? And without minds thus happily organised, and without sensibilities as easily roused as lasting, pliant or ob-



duration, according to the object that excites them into action, or bidding defiance to repulse, inconstancy and dangers, how could chivalry feed its enthusiasm, or imagination awaken into life?

But in this work we find all these anomalies reconciled. We see heroes capable of the wildest enterprises, and subject to the most vehement emotions, to secure the approbation of their mistresses. We see damsels braving every peril, smiling in captivity, to meet the objects of their love. We moreover meet with heroines cased in armour covering hearts at once steeled against the lance's point or falchion's edge, and a prey to the utmost ecstasies of enthusiastic fondness and refined irritability\*.

Such are the personages who now, for the first time, are found to have inhabited the wilderness of sands, under no cultivation of mind, and bound by no moral restraint, but what love and friendship excited

\* M. Sismondi asserts, that in those days no Arabian women were known to bear arms.



and established. Few could read or write. None were philosophers. Wisdom had its only support in the influence attached to advanced years. Their sages were superior in age, and enjoyed a confidence among the tribes that no one could uproot, and which Antar only, by his martial prowess and universally admitted superiority, could thwart.

Whether these traits will tend to suggest further materials to induce the learned to adopt the theory, so much disputed, that romance and all its artificial charms come from the East, and therefore coincide with the opinions already supported so energetically by the Editor of the first volume, the Translator, unbiassed in his own views on the subject, with no decided opinions to render him difficult of conviction to arguments in favour of an opposite system, leaves the point, here untouched, to be canvassed by persons whose time has been more immediately employed in such matters, and whose pursuits have led them



more accurately to distinguish between the pretensions produced in defence of either question.

The Translator has divided the work into three parts, in which order it is his intention to publish it.

The first reaches to the marriage of Antar and Ibla; in which it is the object of the author to raise his hero to a sufficient eminence in rank among the Arabs, by his conquests over various countries, and more particularly by his victories over the individual chiefs and heroes, most conspicuous for their power, and whose haughtiness and martial spirit could ill brook the elevation of one sprung from a slave woman, in order that, by reducing these warriors to submission, and by gaining their good will and friendship, he might, by means of his own intrepidity and the intercession of his friends advocating his cause, attain the chief object of his ambition; his acknowledgment as an Arab chief, and his subsequent marriage with Ibla.



The second part includes the period when the hero suspends his poem at Mecca. This grand point he at length attains, not only by the friendly dispositions of his former associates, and the continuance of his own heroic deeds, but also by the means of his two sons and a brother, whom he discovers amongst the heroes of the desert. Encouraged by their counsels, and urged by his own ambition, after various conflicts and conquests, he resolves to crush the envious malice of his domestic foes, and in despite of all the machinations contrived against him, and the hostilities of all the most potent kings of Arabia, he succeeds in accomplishing this second object of his ambition.

The third part comprises the death of Antar, and most of his comrades and relations; in the course of which he wages endless wars against the more distant tribes, —visits Constantinople and Europe, and invades that part of Arabia inhabited by the Æthiopians, amongst whom he dis-



covers his mother's relations, and finds out that she was the daughter of a mighty monarch, and himself thus descended in both lines from a majestic race. His last conquest is over his domestic enemies. His death is consonant with the rules of poetical justice. He falls under the hand of one whom he might have justly punished with death, but who was the object of cruelty he had never practised on any one before, not even his most inveterate foes.

This division is not at all pursued in the original; but as it is evident that the publication of the whole work at once was impossible, the translator has endeavoured to render its appearance less objectionable. He has also taken another liberty, and has divided the work into chapters according to his own fancy.

The copy of the original from which the translation is made is an uninterrupted narrative. But the larger copy\* he has in

\* Mr. Burkardt procured this at Cairo for the translator; it may be a matter of regret that it had not come



his possession, as also one or two other copies he has seen, is divided into sections of very great length. Another copy, which he only saw for a few minutes, appeared to be cut up into portions much shorter than the chapters as now printed. This is the only alteration he has deemed it advisable to make. Perhaps it would have made the work more generally acceptable, had he ventured even to curtail this abridgement, and to omit many of those reiterated repetitions, which, whilst they tend to give an idea of the original composition, materially damp the interest of the story in our estimation, and certainly weary the to hand still sooner, as the present translation was already finished. Thus he was deprived of the satisfaction of comparing the two copies as he proceeded in the work, and it will be acknowledged, that afterwards it became too serious a task. M. Burkardt said, he did not think there was any material difference; and wherever the translator has referred to the large copy, he has only found greater redundancies, except in some instances where improvements and addition have been made in the translation.



general reader. But where to begin, or where to stop, is difficult to decide. To take the opinion of the ignorant in oriental literature would be unwise in the extreme. The advantage of the advice of oriental scholars was by no means easy to obtain; and of even one acquainted with the book in question, quite impossible\*.

Under these circumstances, the translator, unwilling to quit his original without having some decided landmark to guide him when deviating from the straight course, has adhered as closely as possible to the Arabic idiom, only endeavouring to render it intelligible to the English reader; and if he has succeeded at all in combining what

\* Even Mr. Burkardt had never read it through; neither can the translator say that he ever heard of an European who had waded through the Hijaziyeh copy, the only one hitherto known.

The Translator takes this opportunity of expressing his thanks to C. J. Rich, Esq., the East India Company's resident at Bagdad, for much useful information.



is rarely compatible, an easy English style with the character of the Oriental, he will not consider his perseverance misapplied, or his opinion of the original as erroneous. If, on the other hand, the public should form a different opinion, he begs their judgment may rest solely on the translation, and he will readily join in wishing that the task had devolved on one more capable of doing justice to its merits\*.

\* Since the above has been in the press, a long treatise on Antar, translated from the German, has appeared in the two last numbers of the "New Monthly Magazine," for January, and February, 1820, with the signature of M. de Hammer. The Translator regrets that its late publication prevents his deriving any benefit from the suggestions of so accomplished an Oriental scholar as M. de Hammer, to whose exertions in every department of Asiatic literature the world is so much indebted. M. de Hammer mentions having twice read through the whole work!



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# INTRODUCTION

TO THE

## FIRST VOLUME.

THE Translator of “The History of Antar” being out of England, it is not in the Editor’s power to give to the reader much preliminary information on the contents or nature of the Epic Tale, which is now for the first time in part submitted to the European Public.

Antar is no imaginary personage. He was the son of an Arab Prince of the tribe of Abs, by a black woman, whom his father had made captive in a predatory excursion: and he raised himself by the heroic qualities which he displayed from his earliest



youth, and by his extraordinary genius for poetry, from the state of slavery in which he was born, to the confidence of his king, and to a pre-eminence above all the Chiefs of Arabia. He flourished during the close of the sixth, and the early part of the seventh century, of the Christian æra ; there is, consequently, little or no allusion to the customs or institutions of Islamism throughout the work ; though the Hero is frequently designated as “ He by whom God organized the earth and the world for the appearance of the Lord of slaves.”

The following Romance, as it may be called, was first put together, probably from traditionary tales current at the time, by Osmay, one of the eminent scholars who adorned the courts of Haroun-al-Raschid, and of his two learned successors, Al-Amyn, and Al-Mamoun ; and it still continues to be the principal source



whence the story-tellers of the coffee-houses in Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, draw their most interesting tales : but, notwithstanding its general circulation in the Levant, the name of Antar is hitherto only known to us in Europe as that of the Author of one of the seven poems, suspended in the temple of Mecca, and from that circumstance called *The Moallakat*.

The Author of this poem, and the Hero of our history, are identified, as well by the similar names which occur in both, as by the insertion of the poem itself in the body of the history, when, after much persecution and opposition, Antar at length succeeds in suspending the poem within the Holy Sanctuary which surrounds the Kaaba.

There is reason to believe that this is the first attempt to transpose into an European language a real Arabian story,



depicting the original manners of the Arabs of the desert, uncorrupted by the artificial and refined customs of the neighbouring cities in Syria, Egypt, and Persia.

The characteristics of the real Arabs or Bedowins are here presented in their native simplicity. An eager desire for the property of their neighbour; an unconquerable fondness for strife and battle; a singular combination of profuse hospitality with narrow economy—quick perception—deep cunning—great personal courage, a keen sense of honour, respect for their women, and a warm admiration and ready use of the poetical beauties of their unrivalled language.

The supposition of the learned orientalist Mons. Langlès, that the Thousand and One Nights were originally composed in the Pehlevi, or the old Persian, and from that language translated into Arabic, ap-



pears still more probable, when we observe the rich and gorgeous descriptions of the works of art and nature which abound in them—their enchanted palaces—their sultans and viziers, and all the attendant magnificence of a court; their genii and magicians—their want of individual character in the leading personages;—and when we contrast with those details the simple manners of the Kings and Chieftains of the desert, portrayed in this Romance; their rude tents; the familiarity with which they live amongst each other, controlled only by the rules of patriarchal authority; the almost total absence of supernatural agents; and above all, the striking distinctions of character, which mark the whole progress of the story. In this work indeed, The Subordination of the warriors and others, whether of high or low rank, to the irresistible Antar; in undaunted courage; in



active prowess ; in intellectual acquirements ; in public spirit ; in the ardour of his love ; in the excellence of his poetry ; and in acts of private generosity and benevolence, is strictly consistent with the best rules which the Critics have derived from the Homeric writings, for the conduct of the Heroic poem.

In an adherence to these rules indeed, the early European writers of Romantic Adventures, who followed the age of Charlemagne, and to whom, perhaps, Antar was better known than to their successors, did not follow the steps of their prototype. But whether he really deserve that appellation, that is, whether from the frequent intercourse between the Eastern and Western kingdoms of the Roman world, in the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries, our Romance writers imbibed their taste for the adventures of Chivalry from this singular Tale,



is a question, to the solution of which we may look forward, when the whole of it shall be before the public. It may be observed, however, that little more was wanting, in order to compose the Romances of the middle age, than to engraft on the war, love, and courtesy of the Arabs, the splendid and soft luxuries of the other countries of the East, the witchcraft of Africa, the religious fervour of the South of Europe, and the gloomy superstitions of the North.

The Editor abstains from adding any further observations at present upon this subject. It had been his intention to request the indulgence of the reader for the oriental phraseology which frequently occurs in the following pages; but he prefers leaving the public to form their own opinion how far the Translator has rightly judged, in presenting a literal translation



of his original, by which the Arabic idioms might be best preserved, rather than (by giving to it a strictly English dress, and thereby destroying its native freshness), to have been led into an indulgence of ornament, which would have been equally remote from the nice refinement of the languages of Europe, and from the copious simplicity of that of the desert.



# LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

## ANTAR.

### CHAPTER I.

ISHMAEL, son of Abraham, was the father of Adnan, who had a son called Maad; and Maad was the father of Nizar, whose four sons, Rebeeah, Medher, Ayad, and Anmar, reigned over the Arabs in great glory for many years, and their descendants continued to flourish and multiply till they amounted to twenty thousand horsemen, when disturbances arising among them, they separated, and migrated from the valley of Mecca and the holy sanctuary, and many of them settled in a spot called Ibreem-oob-mootemim, which was the furthestmost point of Hijaz, and the first in the land of Yemen. And they had a king called Rebeeah, a man much respected and feared, and he was of the tribe of Medher, a fair-raced people: and he had five sons; the eldest was



called Nayil; the second, Taweed; the third, Mohelhil; the fourth, Medher\*; and the fifth, Adee: and their father was a stout and intrepid warrior; he conquered the whole country by his bravery, and ruled over the wilds and the deserts.

Again the Arabs disagreed amongst themselves and dispersed, and every division had its chief and its leader. They carried away their property and their camels, and among them was Harith, son of Obad the Yashkirite, with the tribe of Yashkir, and the chief Dibyan with the tribe of Dibyan, and the chief Abd Shems with his tribe, and Jazeemah with the tribe of Abs† and Adnan, and Bahiej with the tribe of Ghiftan; and it was Jazeemah, King of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, that attacked Rebeeah, and having slain him, appointed Mohelhil to succeed his father. But on the death of Mohelhil all his cousins went away with their property and camels, afraid of the surrounding Arabs, and settled with the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and their chief Jazeemah; and among all the Arabs there was no government better regulated than his, for he was experienced in all affairs, and had ten sons, who were all hardy lions, bold, endued with great bodily strength, and in war they were unrivalled; they

\* From whom Mohommed was descended.

† The founder of the tribe, and also descended from Medher. The descendants of Ishmael are called the tribe of Adnan, because the genealogy between Ishmael to Adnan is defective.



courted battles and plunged into slaughter, and their reputation was spread among the Arabs, and among them were Amroo and Jancah, and Asyed and Zoheir, and the rest of the ten brothers. But Amroo was the eldest, and King Jazeemah hoped that Amroo would reign at his death. But one day Amroo went to the lake Zatoool Irsad, early in the morning, and with him was a slave called Nizah; and Amroo had round his neck a chain of gold studded with jewels and diamonds; and when he came to the lake he stripped off his clothes, and took off the string of jewels from his neck, and then going down into the lake left them all with his slave. When he sprang into the water and plunged in, his body disappeared, and was borne away.

The slave perceiving that his master remained too long under water, felt assured that his breath was extinct; so he ran away to Jazeemah, and told him of this dreadful event. He was in the deepest grief, and he dashed his fist against his face for the loss of his son Amroo. Over the whole tribe the dismay was general, the affliction was universal, and the lamentations deep. Many days and nights they remained in this state, when at last King Jazeemah, wishing to relieve his mind from his anguish, went out to the chase, and whilst he was thus occupied, lo! there appeared a fawn, which he eagerly pursued; but as it launched into the waste in full flight, he could not catch it. Still he hoped to succeed; but at last it



entered a forest abounding in trees, and waters, and thickets, and Jazeemah still pursued it. And whilst he was struggling through the branches, behold, a man quite naked stood before him ! He fled away in terror, fancying that it was a dæmon : O King ! exclaimed the man, be not afraid, for I am thy son Amroo ! If thou art my son, cried the King, follow me, and quit this spot. Jazeemah issued from the forest, and the man coming up with him, he gazed at him, and lo ! he was his son ! He was greatly rejoiced, and running up to him, O my son, said he, what has happened to thee ? who brought thee to this place ? and thou art naked ! So he explained all that had occurred to him, and the cause of his being snatched away from the lake was a dæmon, who bore him to this place. His father joyed in seeing him, and clothed him in some of his own garments, and returned with him to his tribe and companions, and unbounded was the delight and satisfaction at the return of Amroo. Acclamations were loud, and the time passed happily away, and they forgot the evils of fortune.

All the Arabs took refuge with King Jazeemah, and paid him taxes and tribute, and there was not one but obeyed him and submitted, save a single Queen, who was called Robab. And this Queen was very powerful, and had numerous armies and slaves. She had subdued the heroes, and humbled the bravest, and her tribe was the most intrepid



of the Arabs, and they were called the tribe of Reeyan. And when they heard that King Jazeemah was become powerful and had extended his influence, and that the Arabs gave him tribute in cattle and camels; We, said they, will not give any one even a rope's end; and whoever demand goods of us, nothing will we give them but blows and battle.

Upon hearing this, Jazeemah assembled his armies and warriors, and the Arabs came to him from all the vallies and the waters, and he marched away with them in quest of the tribe of Reeyan, and their Queen Robab, that he might send down destruction and torments upon them, and leave their property to be pillaged by the Arabs. Now when the tribe of Reeyan saw those armies that were advancing upon them, they set up a loud shout, and they thronged in haste from all quarters, and the mountains trembled at the uproar. This tribe was exceedingly numerous, and moreover they had been joined by a great multitude who came to them and settled round them, to be under the protection of that tribe and their Queen Robab; so great was her reputation, and so far famed her name.

And when the armies arrived and were all established about her, they waited in anxious expectation of the event. So the Queen summoned one of her tribe, a man of great consequence, and said to him—I wish thou wouldst go to these advancing people, and see what they are resolved to do, what place they come from, and what they want. The



man went away ; and when he came up with the troops, they stopped. Whither in such haste ? they cried : speak ere thou art a lost man ! Arabs, said he, I am come as a messenger to ye ; I want to see your chief. Tell me what is your object ; who are you ? how are you called ? We are the noble tribe of Abs, said they ; and we are come to devastate your lands, and plunder your property, and capture your wives and families. Arab Chiefs, he replied, show me your King, lead me to him, that I may speak with him about the object of this expedition. They accordingly introduced him to the King, and he kissed the ground before him. Jazeemah asked what he wanted, and what brought him there. So he told him that Robab had sent him. O King ! he continued, what has brought thee forth from thy country ? What is the cause of thy departure from home ? He then informed him that he was come to slay the people, and to plunder their property. Mighty King ! said the other, may God for ever confirm thee in thy possessions ! Why wouldst thou act thus towards us ? On account of your refractory conduct towards me, said Jazeemah, and the language I have heard ; for all the Arabs have submitted to my rule, and obeyed my call, and give me tribute and taxes, all but you, ye cowards ! and I have heard of your base designs. But I must assail you without further preparation, and I shall command these armies, numerous as the locusts, to assault you, and to grind you like grain, and to



ride you like lions. Return then to her who sent thee, and tell her what I have said to thee.

So the messenger returned with this answer; and when he reached Robab, he communicated all he had heard to her. Away back to him, said she, and tell him to-morrow morning to sally forth into the plain, and to meet me in the field of battle before these horsemen. If he subdues me, I will submit to him, and pay him tribute; but if I vanquish him, I will grant him his life, and take his ransom; and by this means we shall spare the lives of the people, and be released from war and carnage, and then return home to our country.

The messenger returned to King Jazeemah, and informed him of the conditions Robab had proposed. He agreed, and consented, and immediately he came down to the field, and he was like a furious lion; he galloped and charged before the warriors, and rushed in to the scene of blows and thrusts. Queen Robab dashed down on him, mounted on a raven-coloured steed, strong-sinewed. She charged with him over the plain till the horsemen were amazed. Then they began the storm and bluster, the sport and exertion, the give and take, the struggle and the wrestle; and every eye gazed intently on them, and every neck was stretched out at them. Just then passed between them two matchless spear-thrusts. King Jazeemah's was the first, so roused was he by the terrors and calamities that threatened



him. But when Robab beheld the spear-thrust coming upon her, and that death was in it, she bent herself forward till her breast touched the horse, and the well-aimed thrust passed without effect. She then replaced herself on her saddle, and dashed furiously at him, and attacked him: she struck him with horror, and drove the spear through his chest, and forced out the point sparkling at his back. He tottered from his horse, and his senses were annihilated. Then the Arabs assailed one another, and the earth shook beneath them. Blows fell right and wrong, necks were hewn off, and hoary beards were stained with blood. The struggle was intense; and all the Arabs in those valleys were in universal commotion, like so many Genii.

Soon fled the tribe of Abs and Adnan and all their allies, and sought their homes and abodes in fear of death and annihilation; neither did they halt in their flight and rout till they reached their own camp; and when they learnt the extent of their misfortune, and how many kings and chiefs had been slain, the lamentations were general. Calamities struck them all; they threw down their tents and pavilions; and thus they continued seven days and nights, when King Amroo seated himself on the throne of his father, and the Arabs came to condole with him, and congratulated him on his kingdom. But he lived only a short time, and when he died his brother Zoheir succeeded him, and reigned in



glory and power. His authority was universally acknowledged, and the Arabian tribes, far and near, obeyed and feared him. His subjects were happy under his dominion, on account of his great influence, and chiefs hastened to testify their allegiance. As soon as he was established on his throne he resolved on taking his revenge, and for this purpose he assembled his armies and auxiliaries, and demanded the presene of all the Arabian princes.

In a short time his troops were all prepared, and immediately he set out on his expedition against the hostile tribe of Reeyan and their Queen Robab. He stopped not till he entered their country. As soon as the Princess was informed of this invasion, she called together her adherents, who came from all parts and from the mountains; but they feared for their families, and their wives, and their cattle and camels. They marched eagerly to the conflict, and delayed not a moment till they attacked the tribe of Abs: they rushed forwards with the intention to destroy them. The two tribes soon engaged. Fierce was the combat and loud the clamour on all sides. The battle raged; dreadful were the blows of the sabre, and frequent the rush of darts and javelins; numbers were wounded; every warrior stood firm; but the cowards fled: patient were the noble-hearted, but the weak sought safety in flight. Many drank the bitter poison of death. King



Zoheir encountered the Queen of Reeyan on the field of battle, whilst she was encouraging her troops. The King furiously assaulted her, and exclaimed, "Revenge for King Jazeemah." He then hurled his lance and struck her on the chest, and forced out the weapon between her shoulders, and again cried out—O by the noble Arabs! Their only reply was a loud scream, and the battle still continued. But when the tribe of Reeyan saw the Princess dead, and perceived their attempts were frustrated, they were alarmed. Then rushed forward the tribe of Abs, and attacked them with renewed violence. The Reeyanians were routed, and fled towards their habitations;—the Absians pursued them, and spread desolation among them; slew them with their swords, and dispersed them amongst their wilds and deserts, until they reached their country, where they took possession of their tents and plundered their property. Zoheir returned home, and rejoiced in the execution of his vengeance. He divided the wealth and lands of all that belonged to his enemies among his own people, and all the spoil was given to the rich and poor, to his slaves and his chiefs. Many of the hostile leaders were put to death: all the Arabs far and near were terrified at the extent of his dominion, and the power of his arm.

At this period the Caaba and the holy Mecca were visited, as at this day. Numerous were the



pilgrims at the shrine of Abraham. Sacred were the months of pilgrimage; and had a man even killed his father at that period, his crime was never mentioned. Zoheir, after he had accomplished these glorious deeds, wished to make a pilgrimage; which he executed, attended by all the chiefs of his tribe. His admiration was great in performing the ceremony of walking round the Caaba, and in kissing the sacred stone. On his return home, he was anxious to erect a building similar to the sacred altar, whither pilgrims should resort, where travellers might be entertained, and the hungry fed, and the fearful be in security; in whose precincts no beasts of prey should be chased; no blood should be shed; and a transgressor of my law shall be instantly put to death with this sword, he exclaimed. These sentiments he expressed to his tribe assembled in council. All were in dismay at this resolution, but no one dared to disapprove or make any answer. But an old Sheikh, who had passed all his days in perusing ancient chronicles, and was well acquainted with all the sayings of the wise men, who acknowledged the unity of God, the maker of the heavens and the earth, ventured forth, and expostulated with Zoheir, telling him the Caaba was the mansion of the blessed Abraham, and were he to presume to imitate it, a cruel death would avenge the insult; and thus he addressed him:—

“O great King, O Son of noble chiefs! hold and



“listen to my words, and renounce the habits of  
“the ignobly born. Mount not the horse of  
“Outrage, for it will not rescue thee from the  
“messengers of Death; and soon mayest thou ex-  
“pect him, shouldst thou erect in the desert a  
“mansion like the sacred shrine of the Caaba;  
“shouldst thou establish similar rites and ceremonies  
“and resemblances to Menah and Zengein \* and  
“the temple. Away, away, their land is the land of  
“a tribe superior to all mankind; and from them  
“shall appear a noted man, the prophet of God,  
“the torch of darkness, whose faith shall extend  
“east and west with the death-bearing sword of a  
“noble warrior. Away with what thou hast said,  
“for thy God is swift of vengeance.”

The King was not easily dissuaded, but at last gave way to the argument of the Chief, and no longer persisted in his resolution: he was moreover induced to resign his plan in compliance with all his Chiefs, who seconded the word of the Sheikh. In this situation remained King Zoheir for some years; when he became anxious to marry, and to take a wife eminent for her beauty and elegance of form, and of a noble family. He made all inquiries on the subject, and at last heard there was an Arab, strong and mighty in arms, and a famous horseman, called Amroo, son of Shedeed, and he had a daughter whose name was Temadhur, whose equal was to

\* Places near Mecca.



be found neither in the plains nor in the cities. Her father was a severe man, and would let no one address her, saying his daughter would not marry. When Zoheir heard this, he longed for her as a thirsty man wishes to have water. He pictured to himself her perfections, before he had ascertained her worth by inquiries. However, he did not send to demand her in marriage, but made her father some handsome presents, and evinced the greatest fondness for him, making him one of his particular companions, and thus gained his affections. He then persuaded him to come and settle in his country, expressing his great love for him; and thus he never ate or drank but in his society.

The excess of his passion increased daily, to such a degree, that he resolved to assemble a party of his followers called the tribe of Ghorab, and instruct them to attack the family of Amroo, and plunder his property, but not to kill any one, or do any personal injury. So by this stratagem he expected to discover Temadthur among his prisoners, and then have an opportunity of speaking to her. The tribe of Ghorab were accordingly ordered on this expedition, and instantly they set out, in number five hundred. Without difficulty they seized the property, took Amroo prisoner with his wife and family, and plundered his camels and cattle, but refrained from slaying any one. When the King heard what had happened, he mounted his horse in order to behold



what he anxiously desired. He found them in dismay, expecting assistance from the tribe of Abs. The family were looking at their flocks dispersed about, but Temadthur was standing at the door of the tent, blooming as the dawning sun, and her forehead bright as its rays, and her cheeks were red as the piony, her hair dishevelled, black as night. When Zoheir saw this, his passion greatly increased; he cried out, and instantly his people rushed forward and furiously attacked the tribe of Ghorab: the women fled, but Zoheir ordered Rebia, son of Zeead, to hide Temadthur under her veil, which was accordingly done.

Thirty prisoners were secured belonging to the tribe of Ghorab; they and their property were delivered up; and when quiet was restored, the King ordered a magnificent feast to be prepared, that he might make merry with his tribe and followers. They and the father of Temadthur soon assembled together, and in less than an hour grief was converted into joy; the wine was plentifully distributed, and the uproar was great. The King soon became intoxicated, and launched out into violent praise of Amroo the son of Shedeed; and he ceased not to extol and laud his deeds till the tears came into his eyes, and the wine disordered his senses. Then Amroo got on his legs and addressed Zoheir:—O mighty and magnanimous King, I am your slave. My tongue fails in description of your virtues. God has given me nothing that I prize but my daughter Temadthur,



from whom I have kept all suitors. I request of ye, assembled Chiefs, that he may accept her as his handmaiden.

As soon as Zoheir heard this, he rejoiced and was glad; and the Absians answered, And we too will beg King Zoheir to accept her, and to cause the daughters of noble chiefs to wait on her. As soon as Zoheir heard these words, he leaped up, and taking the old man by the hand, most earnestly entreated him to consent. He richly clothed him, and made him handsome presents, and then said, She shall be, O Chief, equal to the most elevated in rank, and highest in dignity. The marriage canopy was instantly pitched, and there was no further demur. The damsels advanced, conducting the concealed treasure. Her approach was at that moment sweeter to him than sleep to the wearied eyelids, and he beheld in her the stem of a tall reed, and the rose of the soul. They were immediately united: on the second day Zoheir arose and thanked his fortune, for his anxieties were past. He made presents, and distributed the gold and silver, and he made Amroo's people remain with him, that he might treat them for seven days, when he made the marriage-feast, slaughtering camels and sheep.

The King's surprise and delight made him so vain and conceited, that at last he imparted to his wife the stratagem by which he had obtained her without a dower or settlement. When she heard



this, her soul revolted at the act. She was a shrewd sensible woman, but she said nothing to him about it all the next day; when intoxicated he wished to caress her; she repulsed him, and turning away from him, said—Are you not ashamed of what you have done? Do you pretend to liberality and generosity, and thus seize the daughters of brave men by force, and refuse them a dower?

These words irritated the Chief greatly, and he answered, I have not been so avaricious; I had recourse to this violent act, because your father yielded not to my proposals, and repulsed all suitors from you. I had therefore no other means of dealing with him but by this outrage; and you know, that had your father accepted my proposals for marriage at first, then you would have seen what I would have given you, and the dower I would have presented. You have confessed the deed, she replied, and you have won me by force; this is the work of violence; but we are indeed more cunning than you.

As soon as Zoheir heard these words he was greatly enraged, and his anger exceeded all bounds: he rose from his bed and exclaimed, Where have you seen any folly in me? and where, as you say, are you more sagacious than I am? Be not angry, O King, said she; know that he who speaks too freely will often have a bitter reply, and he who contemptuously treats women will fall into difficul-



ties. Know then that I am the sister of that woman you beheld, so beautiful and fair; you have not succeeded with her, and have not obtained possession of her charms. She is more beautiful than the sun and moon. I am not worthy to be her handmaid. I do not possess a particle of her charms. On the face of the earth there is not her equal: amongst the daughters of Arabia there is not her like. By your show of liberality you deceived my father; he gave me to you; but my sister's name is Temadhur, at the sight of whom every beholder is amazed, and every heart is in raptures. But I am called Khidaa; and between her and me there is a vast distance, both in beauty and disposition; but it is now too late: had you not done this, I would not have informed you of what has passed.

The pleasing dream fled. How can I believe you? said the King. If, said she, you wish to prove my words, you have only to order some old woman to go and look at my sister behind her veil, and then the truth and mistake will be evident. No human being can behold your sister, added he, but a merchant, or a blacksmith, or an astrologer, or a perfumer. You are right, she replied, for the daughters of Arabia value the goods of a merchant, a blacksmith, an astrologer, and a perfumer. Then, said the King, there is no intelligence like the eyes, and no sight like the hearing of the ears. I am myself an Arab, and I must under-



take the business myself. I will execute all that is necessary, and will go to your house in the disguise of a perfumer.

He slept till the day dawned, when he said to his attendants, If any one should demand admittance to me to-morrow, say, You cannot enter to-day. He undressed himself and took off his royal robes, and habited himself as a poor man, and took with him some perfumes and drugs; for he was greatly vexed at what had passed. He departed from his tent, his loins girt round, and his feet naked, and when he was at some distance he quickened his pace.

But his wife Temadhur, as soon as the King was gone, also rose, and threw off her veil, and putting on the cloak of her husband, dressed herself as a man, and leaving the tent, sought the tent of her family. When she reached it, she sent for her mother, and her father, and her brothers, and told them all she had heard from the King her husband. When her father and brothers heard this, they were greatly surprised at her cunning and her disguise. She kissed her father, and said to him, Do you and my brothers withdraw instantly, and conceal yourselves close at hand; and when King Zoheir arrives and comes towards us, with his cloak-bag over his shoulders, we will let him in and detain him; do you also rush in, and instantly lay hold of him, keep him fast, and do not let him go until he makes good the marriage dower; or we shall



be a scandal among the Arabs. And if he abuses you for this, tell him it is a return for his acts towards us, and the disgraces his stratagem has brought on your daughter. On this, they retired, armed themselves with swords, and lay concealed. Temadhur took off her man's attire, and put on the robes of a secluded female, and drew her veil over her eyes, and blackened her eyelids with antimony, and sat down, expecting Zoheir would arrive, conversing in the mean time with her mother.

Zoheir soon appeared from amongst the tents, and his eyes were like the eyes of a fox. Temadhur's mother cried out, Enter, merchant; have you any perfumes that will suit my daughter? He entered, and throwing down his cloak-bag off his shoulders, and looking towards his wife, said, Are the perfumes for this damsel? Yes, said she. He was much confounded, but asked her name. She said, Temadhur. He then asked, Have you any other daughter? Yes, said she, her sister, whose name is Khidaa; but when King Zoheir demanded her in marriage, we did not consent to it, and so gave him her sister. He knows nothing about it, but we hope to marry her to one of the noblest chiefs.

The light became darkness in his eyes. He thought within himself, verily I will carry off this damsel, and her father and brothers shall die with rage. And when he wished that they would choose some of his drugs, that he might return, the father



and brothers rushed upon him like lions, seized him, and bound him hand and foot. His wife stood before him, and threw off her veil, and rejoicing in her heart, O King, said she, what think you of your situation and your artifices? Which of us is the most cunning?

The King was in despair, and considered himself as dead; but when he saw his wife, his life and spirits revived. Well, said he, what do you intend by this? Your disgrace for your acts towards us, replied she, and for your boast in having got possession of me by fraud and deceit; and we swear by God and Abraham, we will not let you go, neither shall you see me yield to you, or listen to you, or obey you, until you grant me a favour, and swear by the Holy Zemzem that you will give to my father and brethren your protection, and confirm my marriage with a grant of camels and other beasts. Do this immediately, or you shall for ever remain in durance.

When Zoheir heard what she said, he smiled at what she had done, and was ashamed of his own deeds. I will give you, said he, five hundred camels; so now let me go. It is not enough for one hour that I have been your wife, said she. I will moreover, continued he, add five hundred high-priced camels. That, said she, will be even little for a single day. If, O Temadhur, cried Zoheir, you must reckon up every hour of each night, and each day, and buy them as at a market, you will take



from me all my property, both my he-camels and she-camels. Upon that she smiled, and let him loose, and they settled the business between them, *viz.* that he should give them a thousand he and she-camels, twenty horses, fifty male slaves, and fifty female. To this he swore by the God of the holy shrine of Zemzem and Mekam. They then went to dinner, and he remained with them until dark, when he returned with his wife, her father and brothers in company until they came to his tent; there they separated, King Zoheir retiring to his wife; and as his love for her greatly increased by reason of her conduct, he gave her vast possessions; but no one knew what had happened to him, and things remained in this state until she brought forth ten sons, all like lions; the names of whom were Shas, Keseer, Cais, Nakshel, Malik, Nooful, Harith, Khidash, Warcah, Jandil, and afterwards one daughter, who was called Mootejeredah.

And it was a custom among the Arabs, that when a woman brought forth ten male children, she should be called Moonejeba, i. e. ennobled, and her name be published amongst the Arabs; and they used to say that the wife of such a one is ennobled. Now Mootejeredah, the daughter of King Zoheir, was the beauty of the age, and in wit and sense surpassed all the daughters of Arabia. And Fatima, the daughter of Hewseb, was also a Moonejeba, the wife of Zeead, the son of Abdallah, and she also



brought forth ten sons; they were called Rebia, Amarah, Ans, Hafiz, Talib, Ghalib, Dinrak, Amroo, and Zitak. Thus the children of Zoheir, and Carad, and Zeead, became the chiefs of the tribe of Abs, and their noble leaders, particularly the family of Carad, who consisted of Shedad, Malek, and Zakhmet-ool Jewad, who were all illustrious warriors. King Zoheir was established in his dominions, and all the Arabs and Kings of the age obeyed him, and sent him presents from every quarter. And the tribe of Abs passed their time in plundering and killing the chieftains, till all Arabia was overawed by their power, and the dwellers of the deserts feared them.

Now the narrators of this History, Asmaee, and Joheinah, and Aboo Obeidah state, that ten horsemen of the family of Carad quitted the country to seek their fortunes, and among them was Shedad, the son of Carad, and he was called the Knight of Jirwet, for his mare was called Jirwet, whose like was unknown. Kings negotiated with him for her, but he would not part with her, and would accept of no offer or bribe for her; and thus he used to talk of her in his verses:

“ Seek not to purchase my horse, for Jirwet is not  
“ to be bought or borrowed. I am a strong castle  
“ on her back, and in her bound are glory and great-  
“ ness. I would not part with her were strings of  
“ camels to come to me with their drivers following



“ them. She flies with the wind without wings, and  
“ tears up the waste and the desert. I will keep  
“ her for the day of calamities, and she will rescue  
“ me when the battle-dust rises.”

The party set out from the land of Shoorebah; the ten were all well reputed warriors and famed horsemen; they were clothed in iron armour and brilliant cuirasses; their object was to obtain horses and camels. They continued their journey till they entered the country of Cahtan: they lay concealed all day, and only travelled by night. At length they reached the mountains of Aja and Selma; and there, between two hills, they discovered a wealthy tribe, possessed of considerable property and great riches; they were called the tribe of Jezeela. Numerous were their tents, and their dwellings, and their warlike weapons, &c., and the camp was like the boisterous sea dashing its waves, so numerous were their slaves, and attendants, and their horses of various colours. It was a tribe under no apprehension of a change of fortune.

And when the Absians perceived their vast wealth and prosperous situation, they feared to attack them, so they quitted them and made for their pasture ground, where they perceived a thousand camels grazing, there being much grass in that spot, and with them was a black woman who was watching them. She was of extraordinary beauty and well-shaped; her appearance was elegant and striking;



and with her were two children, looking after the camels and running about. As soon as the Absians saw the camels, they attacked them, and hunted them like hares with their spears, then drove them away, together with the woman and children; yet keeping in the rear, ready to attack whoever might overtake them; and they had not gone far ere the people came after them, crying out, Whither would flight secure you, you wretches? here are we in pursuit of you. Verily your feet have borne you to your ruin and destruction. Upon this the Absians fixed their spears, and gave the reins to their horses, and met their assailants, pouncing down on them like falcons. They stood firm of soul, and plied their lances among them: blood flowed, and the horsemen were stretched on the earth, where they left them as carrion for the wild beasts of the desert. The tribe of Jezeelah fled, unable to resist the foe, and retreated to their own country, their heroes being slain and their property captured.

The Absians drove away the camels and cattle, and returning home, they halted by the side of a stream, in order to divide the property. But the woman who was carried off with the camels had made a great impression on the heart of Shedad, and he longed for her in his soul: her form was delicate, her eye inspired love, her smile was enchanting, and her gestures graceful. As the poet has said, "In blackness there is some virtue, if you



“ observe its beauty well ; thy eyes do not regard the  
“ white or red. Were it not for the black of the mole  
“ on a fair cheek, how would lovers feel the value  
“ of its brilliancy ? Were not musk black, it would  
“ not be precious. Were it not for the black of  
“ night, the dawn would not rise. Were it not for  
“ the black of the eye, where would be its beauty ?  
“ and thus it is, that the black ambergris has the  
“ purest fragrance.” He therefore took the woman,  
and gave them the booty, that they might renounce  
her. So he kept her to himself.

This woman's name was Zebeeba, and the two children were hers ; the eldest was called Jareer, and the youngest Shiboob. He remained with the woman in the field, and the children tended the flocks. Shedad visited her morning and evening ; and thus matters continued till she became pregnant ; and when her time came, she brought forth a boy, black and swarthy like an elephant, flat nosed, blear eyed, harsh featured, shaggy haired ; the corners of his lips hanging down, and the inner angles of his eyes bloated ; strong boned, long footed ; he was like a fragment of a cloud, his ears immensely long, and with eyes whence flashed sparks of fire. His shape, limbs, form, and make resembled Shedad ; and Shedad was overjoyed at seeing him, and called him Antar, and for many days he continued to gaze on him with delight. But when Zebeeba wished to wean him, he grumbled and growled exceedingly,



and the corners of his eyes became fiery red, so that he appeared like a mass of crimson blood ; and this was his condition till he was weaned. And he grew up, and his name became known ; but those who had accompanied Shedad in the expedition, having heard of him, all wanted to claim him as theirs. So they all assembled and hastened to him, each imagining he belonged to him, and gave him his name ; till at last they disputed about him, and almost drew their swords, and would have fought, had not respect for King Zoheir prevented them. The circumstance soon reached the King, who ordered them to his presence ; and it happened on that day that he had many guests with him at dinner ; and whilst they were sitting down, Shedad and his companions came and kissed the ground in the presence of the King. He asked them what had happened, and what was the cause of the quarrel. They then informed him, and related all that had passed between Shedad and the woman in their excursion ; how he had taken her to himself, and had given them the plunder ; how she bare him a son, whose shape and appearance resembled a negro ; and how they now all claimed the child as their slave, because he was very stout and strong.

When Zoheir heard this adventure he was greatly surprised, and he said to Shedad, I wish you would produce the young slave that is the object of contention, that I may see him. Upon that, Shedad



departed and brought Antar before him; and the King beheld him, and lo! he was like a lion when he roars. As soon as he saw him he gave a loud scream, and threw a piece of meat at him; but a dog that was there got before him, and snatched up the meat like a hawk, and ran away. But Antar followed him till he came up with him; he was greatly enraged, and seized hold of him with all his strength. He wrenched open his jaws, and tore them in twain even to the shoulders, and snatched the meat out of his mouth. When the King saw this, he was astonished, and the Arab chiefs that were present were amazed; and exclaimed, what ingenuity, what power, strength, and ability! O my friends, said King Zoheir, contend no more about such a wretch as this! but if it is absolutely necessary that this business should be decided, I must refer you to the Cadi Bashar, son of Codha'ah the Fazarean; let him give sentence on this point, and settle to whom this slave belongs. Tell him the story, for he is the Cadi of the Arabs.

When they heard King Zoheir's remarks, they instantly withdrew their hands from their swords, and mounting their horses, went before the Cadi, to whom they explained what had happened. In fine, the Cadi decided that the child should be the property of Shedad; for he was their leader, and no one but him had any knowledge of the woman. You agreed to the partition, said he, and he affixed



his name to him ; you have therefore resigned the woman, and you took your share of the spoil and plunder ; besides, the child resembles Shedad. Contend and be at variance no more, but return in peace and quietness. Thus, as soon as the Arab chiefs heard the Cadi's sentence, they yielded ; and when they reached their homes, they passed their time in friendship and comfort. Soon after, Shedad made a separate house for Zebeeba and her children, and he gave her whatever she wanted, and consigned over to her charge her two children, and also gave her particular injunction about her youngest son called Antar.

Now Antar was becoming a big boy, and grew up, and used to accompany his mother to the pastures, and he watched the cattle ; and this he continued to do till he increased in stature. He used to walk and run about to harden himself, till at length his muscles were strengthened, his frame altogether more robust, and his bones more firm and solid, and his speech correct. He then began to tyrannize over boys of the same age, and beat his brothers ; and when he returned from the pastures, he amused himself with the servants and women ; and he would eat nothing but what he liked ; and whoever offended him he would thrash with a stick, till he tortured him ; and all the tribe were his enemies. He used to employ himself in tending the flocks, and as he conducted them, he wandered about the deserts and plains, and loved solitude and retirement.



His days were passed in roaming about the mountains sides, sometimes riding upon the dogs, by which he acquired courage and intrepidity ; and thus he went on till he attained his tenth year. One day he was wandering over the deserts with the flocks, and when the sun was burning hot, he left his people, and climbed up a tree and took shelter from the heat, whilst the flocks grazed, and he watched them ; when, lo ! a wolf started from behind the trees, and dispersed them. But Antar seeing how the animal had dispersed the herds, he descended and ran after him till he overtook him, and struck him with his staff between the eyes ; he made the oil of his brains fly out from between his ears, and slew him ; he then cut off his head and his legs, and returned growling like an angry lion. And so thou wouldst devour Antar's flocks ? cried he, addressing himself to the dead wolf ; but thou dost not know that he is a savage lion. He put the head and legs into the srip he had with him ; leaving the carcass, he returned to the flocks, and thus spoke :—

“ O thou wolf, eager for death, I have left thee  
“ wallowing in dust, and spoiled of life—thou wouldst  
“ have the run of my flocks, but I have left thee  
“ dyed with blood—thou wouldst disperse my sheep,  
“ and thou knowest I am a lion that never fears.  
“ This is the way I treat thee, thou dog of the desert.  
“ Hast ever before seen battle and wars ?”

About evening Antar reached his dwelling ; his



mother took the basket from him, and there she saw the wolf's head and legs. She was quite confounded, but said nothing. She presented them to Shedad, who only desired her not to let him stray about. Do thou and he mind the cattle, and go not far into the wilds, lest some foe meet thee. Zebeeba promised obedience to the words of her lord, and the next day she departed with her three children to the pastures, whither they drove the herds to graze among the plains and the hills. But Antar rode about the country on the horses, and obtained strength and agility by the exercise ; he drove them over the steeps, hurling his reed spear at the trunks of the trees ; and his mother concealed these circumstances from his father, fearing he would beat him or kill him. It was thus he became bold and hardy ; his limbs were robust, his bodily powers increased, and his mind was improved by courage and intrepidity. And when a camel would stray away, he would cry out and make it stop, and he would struggle with and subdue the mightiest of the herds ; and when he seized one by the tail, he tore it off ; and when they resisted him, he would strike them on the back of the head, or tear open their mouths ; and thus he continued his feats till all the servants were afraid of him, and every one far and near dreaded him.

Now King Zoheir had two hundred slaves that tended his herds of he and she-camels, and all his



sons had the same. Shas was the eldest of his sons, and heir to his possessions, and Shas had a slave whose name was Daji, and he was a great bully. Shas was very fond of him, on account of his vast bodily strength; and there was not a slave but feared him and trembled before him: Antar, however, made no account of him, and did not care for him. One day the poor men, and widows, and orphans met together, and were driving their camels and their flocks to drink, and were all standing by the water side. Daji came up and stopped them all, and took possession of the water for his master's cattle. Just then an old woman belonging to the tribe of Abs came up to him, and accosted him in a suppliant manner, saying, Be so good, master Daji, as to let my cattle drink: they are all the property I possess, and I live by their milk. Pity my flock; have compassion upon me, grant my request, and let them drink. But he paid no attention to her demand, and abused her. She was greatly distressed, and shrunk back. Then came another old woman and addressed him, O master Daji, I am a poor weak old woman, as you see; time has dealt hardly with me, it has aimed its arrows at me; and its daily and nightly calamities have destroyed all my men. I have lost my children and my husband, and since then I have been in great distress: these sheep are all I possess; let them drink, for I live on the milk they produce. Pity my forlorn state; I have no one to tend them,



therefore grant my request, and be so kind as to let them drink.

As soon as Daji heard these words, and perceived the crowd of women and men, his pride increased, and his obstinacy was not to be moved, but he struck the woman on the stomach, and threw her down on her back, and uncovered her, whilst all the slaves laughed. When Antar perceived what had occurred, his pagan pride played throughout all his limbs, and he could not endure the sight. He ran up to the slave, and calling out to him, You bastard, said he, what mean you by this disgusting action? Do you dare to violate an Arab woman? May God destroy your limbs, and all that consented to this act.

When the slave heard what Antar said, he almost fainted from indignation; he met him, and struck him a blow over the face that nearly knocked out his eyes. Antar waited till he had recovered from the blow, and his senses returned; he then ran at the slave, and seizing him by one of the legs, threw him on his back. He thrust one hand under his thighs, and with the other he grasped his neck, and raising him by the force of his arm, he dashed him against the ground. And his length and breadth were all one mass. When the deed was done his fury was unbounded, and he roared aloud even as a lion. And when the slaves perceived the fate of Daji, they shrieked out to Antar, saying, You have slain the slave of Prince Shas! What man on earth



can now protect you? They attacked him with staves and stones, but he resisted them all; he rushed with a loud yell upon them, and proved himself a hardy warrior, and dealt among them with his stick as a hero with his sword.

Now among the sons of Zoheir there was one whose name was Malik, and because he was of a mild and gentle disposition, he was beloved of men and women; and his father Zoheir adored him for the sweetness of his temper, and gentleness of his conduct. It so happened that on this day he went out with a numerous train to hunt, and passing that way he heard some confused cries, and perceived a great dust. On approaching the place, he observed a number of slaves surrounding one man, whom he discovered to be Antar: the blood streamed from all parts of his body from the blows they struck him with sticks and stones; yet he was determined to die sooner than give way. When the Prince saw this, his eyes filled with tears, and in pity he cried out, God prosper thee for a noble slave; how hard are thy blows, how vast thy power! and then, addressing the slaves, he said, Accursed be your fathers, and your abandoned mothers! Do you not fear the punishment and condemnation of every one far and near? Why have you collected in such numbers, and all conspired against one poor fellow, and thus to vent your fury on one much younger than yourselves? Away, or I will destroy you all, both high and low, with this sword. He then



went to Antar, to learn what was the matter, and he heard him growling like a furious lion, and repeating these verses.

“ O my soul ! strive not to fly ; thou canst not  
“ escape when death seeks thee : death is pre-  
“ destined ; it will come in some shape or other. En-  
“ dure then with the patience of one nobly born. Fly  
“ not from the fears of death, or thou wilt remain  
“ scorned among the Arab chiefs.”

The Prince desired Antar to explain the business, which he did, and told him all that had happened between Daji and the old woman ; how he had struck her, and thrown her on her back ; how he had exposed her person, and made the people laugh at her. I then came up to prevent him ; he struck me in the eye, and nearly killed me ; but I seized him with my hand, and dashed him against the ground. I broke his bones, and then his slaves attacked me, and wanted to seize me in revenge ; but I thought proper to defend myself : had you not arrived I should have been killed.

When Prince Malik heard this, his admiration of Antar increased, and he was convinced he was a hero, and that there was not such another alive. Walk by my side, said he ; I will protect you against every one that exists under the heavens, against all who eat bread and drink water. Antar bowed down before him, and kissed his feet in his stirrup, and walked on with the slaves. But when they came nigh the tents, there appeared his brother Shas : in



his hand was a dazzling sword, and under him a steed swifter than a cloud when it rains, and his bosom was charged with fury and indignation, and he was about to slay Antar. When his brother Malik saw him, he was aware if he did not keep him away from Antar, he would destroy him. How is it I see thee so disturbed? said he. Know, said Shas, this accursed Antar has killed my servant, and I am come to cut his body in pieces with this sword. You must not touch him, said Malik; he who dares to injure him is a dead man. I have given him my protection; I will not be separated from him; sooner will I forfeit my head.

Shas took no notice; but fixed his eyes on Antar, who was walking by the side of his brother. He no longer heeded his brother; but ran at Antar, that he might put him to death with tortures. Then, too, Prince Malik was enraged; he drew his sword from the scabbard; the two brothers soon became so violent that their disputes would have ended in a battle, had not King Zoheir, who had been informed of what was passing, instantly joined them. Malik was abashed in the presence of his father, and Shas also quitted his brother. O my son, said Zoheir, give this slave to me and to your brother Malik, and I will in lieu of him give you ten of mine. Upon that, Shas retreated in shame from the presence of his father. Why did you kill my son's servant, said Zoheir to Antar, and



thus disgrace him? and Antar wept at these words: he related what had occurred, how the servant had thrown the woman on her back, and rendered her an object of derision among the servants. The King assured him he approved of his conduct, and turning towards the Chiefs about him, This valiant fellow, said he, has defended the honour of women; he will shine a noble warrior, and destroy his opponents: and then looking at Shedad, Your son's conduct reflects credit on you, he added; his behaviour will remain as a memorial to all generations; he has loathed oppression and violence, and has followed the path of propriety and virtue.

Shedad on that day, when in the presence of the King, was much alarmed about his slave Antar, because he was considered as compromising all about him. Take away your son, said Zoheir to him, I give him to you; take care of him until I demand him of you again, and be not uneasy on this account. From that day both King Zoheir and his son Malik conceived a great affection for Antar, and as Antar returned home, the women and their daughters all collected round him to ask him what had happened; amongst them were his aunts, and his cousin, whose name was Ibla.

Now Ibla was younger than Antar, and a merry lass; she was lovely as the full moon, and perfectly beautiful and elegant. She frequently joked with Antar, and was very familiar with him, as he was



her servant. As soon as she came up to him on that day, O you base-born, she cried, why didst thou kill the slave of Prince Shas? who can now protect thee from him? Indeed, my mistress, he replied, I did no more than he deserved, for he had insulted a poor woman; he threw her down, and made the servants laugh at her. Thou hast acted most properly, said Ibla, smiling, and we are rejoiced that thou art safe, for thou knowest our mothers consider thee as their son, and we look on thee as a brother, on account of thy services. On this the women and girls left him.

Now it was always Antar's business to wait upon the women of the family of Carad, after he had finished his duty towards Semeeah, his father Shedad's wife, whose attendant he was. It was a custom among the Arab women at that period, to drink camel's milk both morning and evening; it was the servant's office to milk it, and cool it in the wind. Now Antar always performed this office for Semeeah, Shedad's wife, first, and then for his aunts, the wives of his uncles Zakmet-ool Jewad and Malik, and for Ibla, the daughter of the latter. He continued to perform this service for a long time; but one day he entered the house of his uncle Malik, and found his aunt combing his cousin Ibla's hair, which flowed down her back, dark as the shades of night. Antar was quite surprised, but Ibla ran away as soon as Antar had entered and seen her, as



her sable locks waved to the ground behind her. This increased Antar's astonishment; he was greatly agitated, and could pay no attention to any thing; he was anxious and thoughtful, and when by himself burst forth into the following strains:

“That fair maid lets down her ringlets, and she is  
“completely hid in her hair, which appears like the  
“dark shades of night. It is as if she were the  
“brilliant day, and as if the night had enveloped her  
“in obscurity. It is as if the full moon was shining  
“in its splendor, and all the stars were concealed  
“by its lustre. Her charms bewitch all around her,  
“and all are anxious to offer their services; they  
“live in her beauties and loveliness, and they are  
“imbued with sweetness from her perfections, and  
“receive new spirit from her graces. Revile me not  
“for my love of her, for I am distracted for her,  
“and live but as the victim of my love. I will  
“conceal my affection in my soul till I can see  
“that I am sufficiently fortunate one day to serve  
“her.”

Antar's anguish daily became more oppressive. It now happened to be the time of the pilgrimage to the holy shrine, and the worship of their idols; and the women and children being left behind in the camp, the warriors and chiefs came out for the feast at a spot called Zatool Irsad, whence they departed for the sacred place. Accordingly they all met, and



the children sung and danced. Ibla was with them, richly dressed, playing and singing amongst her companions. She was decorated with necklaces and jewels, and her countenance was brilliant and blooming—more dazzling than the rays of the sun. When Antar saw her in all her beauty and loveliness, he was overwhelmed with surprise, his tears flowed, and he thus addressed her in verse :

“ The lovely virgin has struck my heart with the  
“ arrow of a glance, for which there is no cure.  
“ Sometimes she wishes for a feast in the sand-hills,  
“ like a fawn whose eyes are full of magic. My  
“ disease preys on me, it is in my entrails. I con-  
“ ceal it; but its very concealment discloses it. She  
“ moves; I should say it was the branch of the  
“ tamarisk that waves its branches to the southern  
“ breeze. She approaches; I should say it was the  
“ frightened fawn, when a calamity alarms it in the  
“ waste. She walks away: I should say her face  
“ was truly the sun when its lustre dazzles the be-  
“ holders. She gazes; I should say it was the full  
“ moon of the night when Orion girds it with its  
“ stars. She smiles, and the pearls of her teeth sparkle,  
“ in which there is the cure for the sickness of lovers.  
“ She prostrates herself in reverence towards her  
“ God; and the greatest of men bow down to her  
“ beauties. O Ibla! when I most despair, love for  
“ thee and all its weaknesses are my only hope.  
“ Should fortune or my father assist me, I will



“requite myself for its vicissitudes by my fearless  
“spirit.”

When Ibla heard from Antar this description of her charms, she was in astonishment; yet she still continued to amuse herself and converse with her companions. Before the feast was over he was violently in love with her, and his affection completely overpowered him. On the next day he came as usual with the milk; but his heart and soul were so pre-occupied and troubled, that he offered it to Ibla before Semeeah, his father's wife; for his feet went where his heart was interested. Ibla took the cup from him, and fascinated him by her charms. Semeeah was angry, and determined to complain of him to his father; but Antar continued in this state for days and nights, his love and anguish ever increasing.

A short time after, a slave called Zajir, who belonged to Rebia, the son of Zeead, came to Shedad; O master, said he, your slave Antar does nothing but injure your property: he ranges about the country, and all day long he keeps the cattle away from the water and the pastures, riding and driving them about, and reducing their flesh by incessant exercise, and injuring the trees by spearing them; and when I order him not to do so, he abuses me and beats me, and were I to go near him he would kill me. This made Shedad very angry. You tell me the truth, my boy, he replied, for from the



time I have directed him to tend my herds, they do not get fat, but have ulcers in their feet; and this is a proof that he rides them and drives them about the rocky places, and thus they lose their flesh.

As soon as Semeeah heard this, she sought to punish Antar, and told Shedad what had occurred; and complained that Antar had offered the milk to Ibla before her. This added to the anger which Shedad already felt in his heart, but he waited patiently till Antar returned from the pasture; he then seized fast hold of him, tied him up, and beat him with a stick till he took the skin off. His mother saw all this, but did not dare to speak to her master, not knowing the cause of this cruel treatment; but she afterwards inquired of other women, who told her that Zajir had complained of him, and that Semeeah also had complained of his having served the milk to Ibla before her. Zebeeba treasured up all this in her mind till the morning, when she went to Antar, and told him the whole matter, how Zajir had complained of him, and that Semeeah had stated that she had been served with milk after Ibla. O my son, said she, henceforward take care not to offend her, but execute the office properly; and moreover, do not cast thine eyes on Ibla, for she will be thy ruin. No sooner had Antar heard this than he struggled with the cords that bound him, and bursting them, started forward like a lion, and in wrath exclaimed in verse:



“ This day will I slay Zajir, the accursed infamous slave. I will leave him in the middle of the waste, a prey for the devouring beasts. When he is gone, my heart will be at rest, and my soul will be appeased. Who told him to trouble himself about this business, and to endanger me ? If I do not haste to the desert to slay him, my heart will never be at rest, nor my eyes ever sleep.”

Then went he forth in search of Zajir; he found him in the pastures. Thou base-born, he cried, thou son of a foul mother, thou didst instigate my master to beat me. He said no more, but seizing him by the small part of his belly, raised him up, and dashing him on the ground, smashed his bones to pieces. When he beheld him dead, he recovered himself, and began to be alarmed; so he went to the house of his friend Malik, the Prince who relieved him when he slew the slave of his brother Shas, and informed him of what had passed. The prince was astonished, but quieted his fears, promising to get him out of the scrape. He left him sitting in the tent, and went to the habitation of Rebia. On his arrival he only found the women of the family: he inquired for Rebia; they answered—He is gone by invitation to your father's. Immediately he repaired to his father's house, and the matter was just as he wished; for on his entering he observed the Chiefs of the Absian tribe, all seated, and the family of Zeead and Rebia standing



with their slaves and attendants close to King Zoheir. He entered, and made his salutation; and as no one was seated, but all standing, Rebia said to him, Sit down in your place, for we are all standing up because you continue so. Do you wish I should sit down? said Malik; and do you love me? Yes, said Rebia, by the lives of all that are present. Then, replied Malik, I will not sit down till you have given me your slave Zajir. What makes you so anxious, said Rebia, to have him? Because, said Malik, I have observed him to be a good hard-working slave, and very laborious in doing his duty. Sit down, then, said Rebia; I will give him to you, and if you wish, two more with him. Let all these assembled Chiefs be witnesses to what you say, said Malik. Yes, said Rebia, let the God who raised the vaulted heavens, and levelled the expanded earth, witness my grant to you, and that I will never tell you of the favour rendered. Be witness to it, O ye that are present, said Malik. Know, then, O Rebia, that Antar has killed your slave, and has sought my protection; do not therefore seek his life.

When Rebia heard this, his affection was cooled, and he was greatly indignant; he hid his head, and felt ashamed before his assembled associates: great was his wrath; and from that moment he cherished in his heart a violent hatred against Antar. King Zoheir then asked his son what had induced Antar



to kill the slave, and what was his intention and object? Malik related all that had passed. The King smiled, and soothing the heart of Rebia, gave him two strong healthy slaves, and he was pacified.

When the slaves heard what Antar had done, there was not one but feared him; and as soon as the assembly had eaten and drank, they departed, and in the evening Malik returned home, rejoicing in the good tidings that he brought. He filled the heart of Antar with gladness, and placed victuals before him; they slept the whole night together, and Antar repeated the following lines in praise of the Prince:

“ O thou, on whose lofty spirit, my hope, to the  
 “ exclusion of all the universe, depends! My anxie-  
 “ ties have weighed on thee, and my troubles have  
 “ been a burthen to thy noble mind! Thou hast  
 “ granted me favours—thou art my only refuge. O  
 “ thou, who hast rescued me from death and per-  
 “ dition, all my life will I thank thee, till my bones  
 “ disappear in the earth.”



## CHAPTER II.

THUS matters proceeded with Antar and Prince Malik; but the anger of Shedad was only augmented: at last he complained to his brothers Malik and Zakmet-ool Jewad, saying, O sons of my father and mother, my soul is greatly vexed, and my anxiety is redoubled, and I know not what to do, or what will be the consequence of the actions of this black slave. I fear that to-morrow he will destroy some one of rank and power, and some disturbance will arise throughout the whole tribe, and our blood will be demanded, and our persons pay the forfeit. O my brother, said his brother Zakmet-ool Jewad, thou hast hit the mark, and if thou dost not take measures to put this slave to death, he will certainly endanger our lives. However wise a man may be, he is no match for him; but after what has happened, we can never let him take our camels and cattle to the pasture; we must waylay him and kill him, and thus relieve ourselves from this plague. Let us wait till he goes to the meadows, and there let us destroy him in some secret spot; and when we have effected our purpose, we will return. Shedad approved his brother's advice,



and resolved to execute it. In the morning, Prince Malik came to the tent of Shedad, and interceded for Antar: Shedad acquiesced, and let him tend the cattle in the meadows; and forgot him for a time.

But one morning Antar went as usual with the cattle to the pastures, and they followed his steps, seeking to kill and destroy him. On that day, Antar was riding about in the wide plains and deserts, and finding himself alone, he recited some verses in praise of Ibla; he wandered far from the habitations, and thought of his misfortunes; fast flowed his tears, for the night before he had dreamt of Ibla, and that he had kissed her within her veil. He then addressed her in these verses:

“ Ibla’s spirit appeared to me in my sleep, and  
“ thrice I kissed her within her veil. It bade me  
“ adieu, but it deposited in me a flame that I feel  
“ burning through my bones. Were I not left in  
“ solitude alone, and could I not quench the fire  
“ of my passion with tears, my heart would melt.  
“ But I do not complain, though all my fears are  
“ on thy account, O thou perfect full moon! O  
“ daughter of Malik, how can I be consoled, since  
“ my love for thee originated from the time I was  
“ weaned? but how can I ever hope to approach  
“ thee, whilst the lions of the forest guard thy tent!  
“ By the truth of my love for thee, my heart can  
“ never be cured but by patience. O thou noble  
“ maid! till I exalt myself to the heights of glory



“ with the thrusts of my spear, and the blows of  
“ my sword, I will expose myself to every peril  
“ wherever the spears clash in the battle dust—then  
“ I shall be either tossed upon the spear heads, or  
“ be numbered among the noble.”

He went galloping in different directions till he came to a plain called the plain of lions, and here were many ferocious animals and wild beasts; here he let the cattle graze. And Antar only came to this valley, because he knew there was in it abundance of grass of the height of a man. Now not a servant of the whole tribe of Abs would ever enter or approach this valley, because it was very extensive, and filled with lions and tigers. As soon as Antar found himself in it, he said to himself, perhaps I shall now find a lion, and I will slay him. And whilst the cattle were feeding, and he from a mound was looking round on all sides, behold, a lion appeared in the middle of the valley: he stalked about, and roared aloud: wide were his nostrils, and fire flashed from his eyes: the whole valley trembled at every gnash of his fangs—he was a calamity, and his claws more terrific than the deadliest catastrophe—thunder pealed as he roared—vast was his strength, and his force dreadful—broad were his paws, and his head immense. As soon as he appeared in the valley, the cattle scented him and fled away in terror, and the camels were dispersed to the right and the left. No sooner did Antar perceive this extraordinary commotion than



he descended into the valley, that he might observe what was the cause, brandishing his sword. He there saw the lion, terrible in his strength, and lashing his sides with his tail. Antar cried out to him, and the mountains re-echoed to the cry. Welcome, thou father of lions—thou dog of the plains—thou foulest of the wild beasts of the deserts. Now, then, thou wilt exert thy power and thy might, and thou wilt pride thyself in thy roar; for no doubt thou art the monarch and ruler of the brute creation, and all obey thy commands—but return to filth and contempt; thou meetest now no ordinary man. I deal death to the bravest, and render children orphans. Dost thou think, foul-mouthed beast, now about to die, that thou canst frighten me with thy roar, or alarm me with thy bellow? I will not condescend to slay thee with an arrow or a sword, but I will make thee drink of the cup of death from my single arm; and as he rushed towards him, he addressed him in verse.

“ I am the far-famed lion, the warrior whose ex-  
“ ploits every one fears on the day of wars. I save, I  
“ protect the property of my father Shedad, and I  
“ punish the foe with the edge of my sword. When  
“ my hand wields the scimitar on the day of battle,  
“ every heart of the horsemen throbs with fear.  
“ Now will I meet thee in the waste, and make thee  
“ drink a cup of the vicissitudes of fortune. I heed  
“ not death when I meet him, and I comprehend



“ what every tongue can express. Now then I will  
“ throw my sword out of my hand—away then with  
“ thee—and I will destroy thee, thou dog of the  
“ desert, with these hands alone.”

Just at that moment Shedad and his brothers came up to kill Antar. They saw him address the lion, and heard what he threatened: he sprang forward, and fell on him like a hail-storm, and hissed at him like a black serpent—he met the lion as he sprang, and outroared his bellow; then, giving a dreadful shriek, he seized hold of the beast’s mouth with his hand, and wrenched it open to his shoulders, and he shouted aloud—the valley and the country round echoed back the roar: he stuck to him until he was dead, and then dragged him by the legs out of the valley; and having cut some wood, he took out his Zanad\*, struck a light, and made a fire. He waited until it blazed; then ripped up the lion, took out the entrails, and cut off his four legs, and threw them into the flames; and when he perceived they were roasted, he took them out, and ate thereof till he finished his meal: he then ran to a fountain, and drank till he was satisfied; and having washed his mouth and hands, he went to a shadowy tree, where he put the lion’s head under his own as a pillow, and wrapping up his head in a part of his sleeve, he fell asleep. His father and uncles were observing

\* Wood used for the purpose of striking a light.



him and his actions, and as they saw what he did, they were quite terrified and scared. Verily this slave, said Zakmet-ool Jewad, has not his equal; no one in his senses would engage him. Malik also trembled. What shall we do with this wretch? said he. Great indeed has been the deed he has done; none of us can harm him; he would soon destroy us, and tear out our entrails, or do as he has done with the lion. Let us return home, said Shedad, our honour is still safe; we must find some other means to kill him and accomplish our wishes.

Thus Shedad and his brothers returned home, all in astonishment at Antar, and the wonders he had performed. In the evening, when Antar came with the flocks and the camels, Shedad smiled upon him, and gave him a cordial welcome, and made him sit down with him at dinner, whilst the other slaves stood up. And whilst they were all talking, there came a messenger from King Zoheir to Shedad. King Zoheir demands your presence, O Chief, he cried; he has sent me to require you to take with you your warlike weapons, and your brothers, for he is engaged in a business of importance, and wishes to attack the tribe of Temeem, and has resolved on invading their country, and destroying their territory. Shedad, on hearing this, immediately complied, and having assembled his brothers and all their dependents, he turned towards Antar. Tomorrow, said he, the warriors and horsemen are



going to march, and no troops will remain in our habitations, therefore I consign over to you our houses and our women; but take care when you go to the pastures not to wander far in the mountains. Be perfectly easy, my master, replied Antar, about whatever you leave in my charge; should the smallest thing be missing, let me, for the remainder of my life, be kept in chains and bondage! Shedad thanked him, and promised, when he returned from the expedition, to give him a fine horse to ride. In the morning the warriors mounted and prepared for the engagement, and slung on their swords and their javelins; they departed from their habitations, and among the first shone King Zoheir, like a noble lion.

The horsemen being now absent, the children, and women, and slaves, male and female, were left behind. Semeeah, the wife of Shedad, gave a magnificent entertainment at the lake of Zatoool Irsad. Sheep were slaughtered, and wine flowed, and the girls carried their instruments. Antar stood amongst the attendants, and was in transports on seeing Ibla appear with the other women. She was indeed like an amorous fawn; she was decorated with parti-coloured necklaces; and when Antar was attending her, he was overwhelmed in the ocean of his love, and became the slave of her sable tresses. They sat down to eat, and the wine cups went merrily round. It was the spring of the year, when the whole land shone in all its glory; the vines hung luxuriantly in



the arbours ; the flowers shed around ambrosial fragrance ; every hillock sparkled in the beauty of its colours ; the birds in responsive melody sang sweetly from each bush, and harmony issued from their throats ; every ear was enchanted ; the ground was covered with flowers and herbs ; whilst the nightingales filled the air with their softest notes. Then the damsels beat the cymbal, and recited the following verses :

“ The shades have spread their canopy, and the  
“ flowers spread their pillows ; the streams roll along  
“ their shores of flowers, some white, some red, some  
“ yellow, some sweet-scented. See the waters gliding  
“ through the gardens, and the trees and their fruits  
“ resemble bracelets and chaplets : the birds sing  
“ melodiously upon them, in every variety of note ;  
“ the nightingale and the dove pour their plaintive  
“ strain, and make every lover weep ; the gentle  
“ zephyrs whisper along, and the branches move  
“ in softest measure. The boughs dance in the  
“ groves, among the trees, in the graceful move-  
“ ment ; the dew-drops fall, and the flowers and the  
“ trees are studded with its pearls. The season is  
“ delightful ; let it pass in enjoyment, and misfor-  
“ tunes begone ! the opportunity is delicious, let us  
“ grasp in haste its sweets. Be merry, and wild  
“ with joy, and let not a day pass without amuse-  
“ ment.”

Then another set took the musical instruments,



and beating the cymbals with their hands, thus sang:

“The gardens sparkle with all they boast of  
“lovely damsels; every sportive virgin is possessed  
“of languishing glances, and enchanting move-  
“ments; their beauty is perfection, they are loveli-  
“ness itself; their elegant shapes glance like the  
“well-proportioned spears; their tresses float down  
“their backs, like branches of the grape-vine; they  
“are slayers and piercers with their arrows and their  
“darts; archers and strikers, the enchantresses of  
“men.”

They now formed a dance, and took off their robes: the damsels danced whilst the servants sang, and carried round the goblets of wine. Roses were spread over their cheeks, and their bosoms heaved. And Ibla joined her associates in the dance, and exhibited her charms, and laughed. Fire shot from their eyes, and the cups of wine were united to the honey of their mouths. The imagination of Antar was inflamed and overpowered in the sea of anxiety; he hesitated whether he should violate the modesty of love by the fingers of passion, when lo! on a sudden there appeared a cloud of dust; and a vast clamour arose, and in a moment there came forth a troop of horses and their riders, about seventy in number, armed with cuirasses and coats of mail, and Aadite helmets, crying out, O by Cahtan! and they rushed towards the women. At the instant joy



was converted into grief, and smiles into tears : in a moment they seized the women and the virgins, made them prisoners, and placed them on their horses behind them.

But when Antar saw this disaster, and perceived that a horseman had carried off Ibla, and observed her weep, and her cheeks turn from red to a deadly pale, the world seemed contracted about him, and as he reflected that he had no arms with which to fight, he was greatly alarmed, but trusted to his feet. In a moment he overtook the horseman who had seized Ibla, for he happened to be in the rear ; he sprang upon him like a wild beast in its utmost fury, and clung to him, and overpowering him, threw him upon his head, and broke his neck. Silent was the warrior's heart, for Antar had annihilated him, and he took possession of his armour and his steed. He mounted, and pursued the horsemen, rushing down upon them like a torrent, and assailing them with the most abusive and contemptuous language. Hear, ye dastards ! I am Antar, the son of Shedad—abandon your prisoners and the children, or I will attack and destroy you. Return to your tribe of Cahtan in disgrace and despair, or by the Father of mankind, by him who made man to speak with lips and tongue, I will make your heads trunkless. He soon came up with those in the rear, and slew twenty of them ; and when the remaining horsemen perceived what had happened, fifty more re-



turned at a full gallop, pouncing down like eagles ; they saw their companions stretched upon the sand, and immediately attacked him, but he met them, fierce as a devouring lion.

“ Here am I in the boisterous battle, and my  
“ power is well known ; my sword and my deeds  
“ testify to those that see me, that I pierce my an-  
“ tagonist, watchful as he may be. My shield, and  
“ then my spear, and my sword of Indian temper,  
“ were with me in my cradle, my two bosom  
“ friends ; and the earth where I stand reddens like  
“ crimson leather, and blood flows thereon, its colour  
“ a deep scarlet.—Give me pure wine to drink, or  
“ let it be mixed ; give it me old, that I may ima-  
“ gine it was made before the world. She comes and  
“ offers me to drink in cups mantling like the Judas  
“ flower. Give me to drink, and let me hear the  
“ song that delights me :—The sweetest of sounds  
“ to me is the rattle of the Indian blades, and the  
“ clash of lances in the battle, on the day of spear-  
“ thrusts, when the parties shout, and warriors are  
“ adjudged to death : but the dearest of all my  
“ projects, the darling object of all my desires of  
“ fortune, is, that I may behold Ibla at my disposal  
“ in happiness and security.”

He rushed forwards to meet them, and harder than flint was his heart, and in his attack was their fate and destiny ; he assailed the boldest of his opponents, and his assault was the assault of the most obstinate warrior. As soon as he distinguished the



chief of the party, he approached him, he plunged at him—he grappled with him—his shout struck him with horror. He pierced his bosom with his spear, and forced it out through his back. When his companions saw the effect produced, every heart quaked with fear, and felt convinced that death and destruction were at hand; and they said one to another, It is a mere slave that has brought this confusion upon us, a wretch, mean and worthless; what will be our condition if the warriors come to his assistance? Let us fly, or our ruin and annihilation are certain. So they joined the others, and fled away in disorder, abandoning the women, and retreating in disgrace and despair. Antar, as soon as they were dispersed, collected the scattered horses, and a vast quantity of arms. He then returned home, and the women and families being all safe, thus he exclaimed:

“ These are my exploits when I stalk against the  
“ foe, and they abuse me for my black complexion,  
“ which is my glory. I drive away the troops and  
“ the noble warriors, and my colt as he rushes on  
“ plunges into the battle. As to those who envy  
“ me like fools, every one knows that virtue is ever  
“ the object of jealousy. I am the offspring of my  
“ day: the sword is my father; in it is my glory: the  
“ one may be denied, the other is a fact. Never  
“ will I cease to hew down the troops in bodies, till  
“ every opponent be annihilated.”

He returned home, taking with him twenty-five



horses, and all the women and children. Now the hatred of Semeeah was converted into love and tenderness, and he became dearer to her than sleep. They all came home, but Semeeah enjoined the women not to disclose this event to any one, lest their husbands should blame them. Antar also kept it a profound secret. In a short time King Zoheir returned from his victory over the tribe of Temeem, and brought with him an immense booty; and both those that went and those that staid were greatly rejoiced.

The next day in the morning, Shedad went out on horseback, and sought his herds and flocks: he perceived amongst his horses some strange ones, and also saw Antar riding upon a black mare. Whence, cried he, came these animals? and whence got you this mare, that excites my wonder? Now the mare Antar was riding belonged to the chief of the Cahtanians, and the other horses were those the horsemen rode whom he had slain; the spoil and all he had collected were concealed at his mother's. O master, he replied, as I was tending the flocks yesterday, there came some Cahtanians, and with them an immense quantity of cattle: they were much fatigued, and moreover frightened at the Arab horsemen. I followed them, and finding these horses separated from the rest, I took them and brought them back. Thou wicked slave, said Shedad, these are no horses strayed from their owners; thou hast carried them off from beneath their riders:



it is on this account thou wanderest alone in these wilds and rocks, and every Arab thou canst meet thou killest him, and thou carest not whether he be of the tribe of Cahtan or Adnan. Never wilt thou leave off this conduct till thou hast excited feuds among the Arabs, and slain heroes and horsemen!

Now in that age the Arabs were of two classes; from Yemen to India they were called the tribe of Cahtan\*; and in Mecca and Hijaz they were called the tribe of Adnan. Shedad laid hold of Antar, and bound him with a rope. Here, said Shedad, thou shalt remain tied up. Never again will I let thee take my cattle to the pasture. And he beat him with the whip he had in his hand; and as he continued to lash and thrash him, No good will come of thee, said he; evil and abominations are rooted in thee; thou wilt breed dissensions among the Arab tribes, and thou wilt make us a common tale among nations. His father still beat him and abused him, and he bore it all.

At last Semeeah came out, and seeing what was going on, she wept bitterly. She sprang forwards and threw herself on his breast, exclaiming, Sooner shalt thou beat me than him; he does not deserve such ill treatment, O Shedad. But Shedad became very angry with her, and shoving her away, threw

\* Cahtan, i. e. Yoctan, a lineal descendant from Noah. The Cahtanians were esteemed pure and original Arabs; whilst the descendants of Ishmael, under the name Adnan, were called engrafted Arabs; his progenitors being Jews.



her down on her back. She rose up and cast herself into Antar's arms, uncovering her head, and letting her hair flow down her shoulders. This excited Shedad's surprise. What has happened to this wretch, he exclaimed, that you feel so much affection and tenderness, after having expressed so much anger and indignation? Loose his bands, said Semeeah, and I will relate the whole story to you. Tell me, said he, and I will release him. Then she told Shedad all that Antar had done; how he alone had attacked seventy horsemen, and had driven them back in confusion and despair, and had secured in safety all their families and children. Then Semeeah repeated these verses:

“ O Shedad, hadst thou seen me, my face un-  
“ covered, and my person carried off behind the  
“ warriors, and the women of Prince Cais in dismay,  
“ no resource at hand, and their veils trailing on the  
“ surface of the earth! Ibla too! they mounted her  
“ behind a warrior, whilst her tears streamed down  
“ her cheeks. The slaves whom I encouraged, fled;  
“ every one fled, all trembling in affright. Our  
“ families surrounded us weeping in anguish and in  
“ misery. Our camels were driven away, and every  
“ heart was distracted. Then Antar plunged into  
“ the midst of them; into the black rolling dust;  
“ the atmosphere was involved in darkness, and the  
“ birds sunk motionless; their horsemen fled through  
“ fear: this one was slain, that made captive; he  
“ protected us. After he had comforted us all, he



“pursued them, and the honour of them all was  
“destroyed. O it is right I should respect him;  
“protect him; my honour he protected, and he  
“preserved the honour of us all.”

Semeeah's account of Antar's actions astonished Shedad, and he rejoiced and was glad. It is surprising, said he to himself, he kept all this secret; and his submission to be bound by me! 'tis most wonderful! Antar stood unconcerned, and listened to Semeeah's acknowledgments; he bore no resentment, and praised her in these verses:

“Oh! is it from Semeeah that these tears flow in  
“anguish, and from a heart in flames? Shall her  
“form shadow me? can blows harm me, and shall  
“tears burst in torrents from her eyelids? When  
“her tresses hang dishevelled, she is like the rising  
“full moon, veiled in the darkness of night. The  
“property is thy property, the slave thy slave:  
“and life and every sense shall be exerted to save  
“thee. Oh! when the troopers start forth, harsh-  
“countenanced, and the black dust rolls over them;  
“then make use of me. If I do not disperse them  
“in the clash of contending spears, may I never be  
“permitted to drink! may the rain-drop never  
“moisten me! The sword is in my hand, whose  
“blows fetch blood; but the swords of others have  
“no power in their edge. Men are of two kinds;  
“one whose heart is of brittle glass—the other whose  
“heart is of rock.”

When Antar had finished his verses, Shedad came



up to him, and released him, and begged his pardon, for he was convinced that such wit, expressed in verse and prose, could not proceed but from an exalted warrior. At that moment came a servant from King Zoheir, who saluted Shedad. The King, O Chief, said he, sends his salutation to you, and requests you will attend a feast he has prepared. Shedad took Antar with him and went to the feast, and the slave followed him till he reached Zoheir's tents, which he found resounding with cymbals, and other musical instruments, and the victims were slaughtered : and there were assembled the race of Abs and Adnan, and all the valiant heroes attached to them. Shedad seated himself amidst the noblest chieftains, but Antar sat down among the slaves ; and when they had eaten meat, and drank wine, they conversed, and related all the circumstances of the late affair. Antar heard all they said, and Shedad praised his son Antar, informing the king of all he had done, and all he had composed in prose and verse, and related the whole story. All this, cried the King, greatly rejoiced at the courage and eloquence of Antar, I anticipated at the time he slew the slave of my son Shas ; I knew he would be the refuge of every petitioner. Who can execute such deeds or perform such acts ! doubtless he will rise superior to all his contemporaries. And he called out to him, and ordered him into his presence. Antar kissed his hands, and presented him the cup,



and his heart was overpowered with joy and delight. O Antar, exclaimed his friend Malik, the King's son—At your commands, said Antar, thou moon of this assembly. I wish, said Malik, thou wouldst recite to us some of thy verses. Willingly, my lord, said Antar; and he thus continued:

“ Glory is bound to the back of the steeds; victory  
“ on the day of horrors lives in the sword; never  
“ rises the battle dust on the day of fight, but my  
“ pliant spear assists me. How many sand-clouds  
“ have I penetrated, fearless of calamities, when the  
“ faces of black and white swoon in terror! How  
“ many horsemen fly from the encounter of arms  
“ when the war-dust rises; they fly and are re-  
“ pulsed: then rush I into the clanging war: my heart  
“ and my chest are hewn out of the solid rock. O  
“ thou lion-king, have thine eyes beheld the exploits  
“ of the horsemen of the desert, when the foe  
“ attacked us to spoil us of our cattle? then I cut  
“ down their chief on the desert: I raised him  
“ up on my nobly-serving sword: he was dashed  
“ from his saddle, and his cheeks crushed on the  
“ earth. I am thine, O thou King of the earth, and  
“ thy fame shall be spread over every land. Ye are  
“ the princely sons of Jazeemah, and whoever pre-  
“ sumes to resist ye shall quickly be destroyed and  
“ be dismissed from this world. Come on then—it  
“ is the lion who never drew his sword, but every  
“ hero dreaded its encounter. The lions fear, and



“ in their dens tremble at him ; man also dreads  
“ him, and the dæmons of the waste. He shrinks  
“ not from the warriors, numerous as they are. I  
“ plunge into the war-dust, and the warriors charge  
“ against the combatants with swords that pierce  
“ through the throats. I swerve not from my pur-  
“ pose when I am resolved on it, till I accomplish  
“ every wish of my heart. I am indeed your slave,  
“ named Antar ; to him the horrors of battle are  
“ welcome ; he never falters. Mayest thou, O  
“ King, live for ever ! His like is not among the  
“ kings of the earth or the desert. May God ever  
“ preserve for me my father Shedad, for he is a sup-  
“ port for me—nothing existing could recompense  
“ me for his loss, for he is my lord and chief. His  
“ glory is from the race of Abs, the seat of all  
“ honour and liberality.”

When Antar had finished his verses, King Zo-  
heir and all present expressed the greatest pleasure.  
The King called him to him, and giving him a robe,  
thanked him. In the evening he returned with his  
father Shedad, and his heart bounded with exulta-  
tion at the honours with which he had been favoured.  
And his passion for Ibla increased.

One day Antar rode out on one of the horses, in  
company with his brothers ; they drove the herds till  
they came to the pastures, and there Antar remained  
to protect and tend them. Now Shiboob was an active  
sagacious fellow, and had a persuasive tongue, but



he was the devil in the form of a man. In running he would outstrip a deer, and when he ran after a horse, he soon left it behind among the rocks.

Antar had great confidence in him at all times, and feared him more than any human being. Now it happened that the sons of Zoheir were assembled together at the invitation of their uncle Asyed the son of Jazeemah, for in those days, people that loved each other frequently met, and shunned those they disliked. The princes were riding out, and made choice of an eminence, where they halted and pitched their tents, and conversed till dinner was ready. They ate, drank, and laughed and sung, and joked away the time, whilst some of the damsels sang the following strain :

“ Mix thy water in the cup of thy wine, and give  
“ me to drink, for truly I have mixed my tears  
“ with my blood. Let me drink of wine in the  
“ flower-gardens to drive away sorrow, and quicken  
“ my joys. Every charm is combined in her form  
“ that lives like the soul that flows through my limbs;  
“ and whilst she bears the cup in her hand, she ap-  
“ pears kindling the flame of my love. In the  
“ noon-tide sun she dances, and her face is spotted  
“ like the full moon of night with the star of the  
“ Gemini.”

They were seated and drinking, and all were much amused and pleased, and the old wine had its sway. Just then, Malik turned round his head and



saw Antar and his brothers feeding the flocks and camels on a rising ground. Behold my friend Antar, honoured amongst the inhabitants of deserts and cities, said he to his brother: and he called to one of his slaves; Go to Antar, said he, and invite him to our party, that we may hear his discourse, and our enjoyment be complete. How can you look upon this savage? exclaimed Shas, and think of such an ungracious wretch, and thus raise him amongst the chieftains of the tribe? On account of his verses, his consequence and power are extolled, and you bestow on him the highest dignity. But indeed, I feel inclined to rush at him, and tear his life out of his body, were I not afraid of the reproaches and anger of my tribe; and moreover, I should be sorry to interrupt the amusement of my brothers and companions: but indeed, my brother, your repeated admiration of him augments my aversion to him.

Thus were they talking together, when on a sudden, a dust like a cloud arose among them, and there appeared three hundred valiant horsemen, like lions of the forest; and under them were steeds swifter than death. They were of the tribe of Cahtan, on a marauding party, to plunder the tribe of Adnan. And when they found these princes seated and drinking among the hills, they said one to another, Let us attack this party, that we may capture them in an instant, and convey them away



to our country, for it is a wealthy tribe. Then bending their heads over their saddle-bows, they galloped among them, shouting and hallooing—O by Cahtan!

When the sons of Zoheir saw this, they were surprised; they hastened to mount their horses and to gird on their swords. The foe poured down from the summit of the hill; they all at once shouted aloud—they rushed forward and plunged through the dust, assailing the horsemen of Yemen, like the ocean when it bursts and retreats. And when Antar heard their yells and screams, he feared lest the enemy would destroy them with their spears; and greatly was he alarmed for Malik and his brothers. He called out towards his own brothers, and went towards the party, among whom was a horseman whose name was Zatik, son of Maboob. Antar pounced down upon him, and piercing him, left him weltering in his gore. He then assailed his companions, and gave a shout like thunder when it roars. And there was not one that could see or hear; fear and trembling seized them; they beheld only Antar the lion! They fled, and the whole troop was dispersed and routed, till they all disappeared over the extended plains.

Antar returned to the princes, and shouted out to the horsemen that still remained assailing them; and as soon as they looked on Antar, an universal terror shook their frames, and their colour instantly



changed ; for they had seen him scatter heroes like seeds of rue, and trample carcasses under his feet, leaving numbers dashed to the earth ; and none could oppose but those accustomed to plunge into the battle dust. And as he engaged them he roared out these verses :

“ The heights of glory are not attained but at  
“ the point of the spear, and patience in the day of  
“ battle through the heaviest difficulties, and the  
“ challenge of every lion-hero, and long-bearded  
“ warrior. Ask my horse of me, when flashes of  
“ fire fly from his hoofs. I have a spear-thrust  
“ that deals the most excruciating pain, and raises  
“ me above all competitors ; and my Indian blade  
“ cuts through the nocturnal calamities whenever I  
“ draw it. I am the son of the black-faced Zebeeba  
“ that tends the camels. I am a slave, but my  
“ fury o’erwhelms the lordly chiefs in the battle.  
“ As to death, should I meet him, I will not shrink  
“ from him when he appears to me—it is a draught  
“ I must inevitably take when the day of my disso-  
“ lution arrives.”

Then, diving through the dust, he overthrew the horsemen singly, and in pairs, and infused the most violent commotions into the hearts of the combatants. Thus, having driven away by his assaults the fury of war, the sons of Zoheir felt relieved from their distresses. In the mean time a slave had informed the King, who instantly mounted



and departed with his horsemen and troops; but the news did not reach him till Antar had completed the business, and had put his enemies to flight to the right and left; and many were the brave that remained on the field. The princes returned to their tents, Antar preceding them like a lion, repeating these verses:

“ I will not cease to exalt myself by my deeds,  
“ till I reach Orion in my ambitious projects. Here  
“ I care not for those who abuse me, fearful of death  
“ and separation from life. But I will reduce my  
“ foes and my railers by force, and I will be patient  
“ under sufferings and in praise. I will strive to  
“ attain what I desire, till death snatch me away.  
“ I will arm my mind against worldly lusts, that I  
“ may be considered noble-minded and faithful.  
“ Whoever would check me, let him look to himself,  
“ where'er he may be concealed. My complexion  
“ is no injury to me, nor the name of Zebeeba,  
“ when I exercise my courage amongst the foe. I  
“ will work wonders and marvels; and I will pro-  
“ tect myself from the tongues of the wicked.”

When Zoheir heard Antar's verses, he thanked him for his noble conduct, and joyed in the safety of his sons and his people, expressing the warmest attachment and affection for Antar. He then demanded of the prisoners, of what country they were: they replied that they belonged to the furthest lands of Yemen.



King Zoheir soon after gave an entertainment in his tents, rejoicing in the escape of his sons. He sent for Antar, and set him down by his side, and gave him to drink of his most delicious wines, and placed him high amongst all his comrades, investing him with a superb robe, worked in gold, girding on him a trusty sword, and mounting him on one of his finest Arab horses. He took pleasure in seeing him, and called him the Champion of the Absians. From this day forward, said he to Shedad, I will not permit him to attend your flocks; now that he has thus distinguished himself by such glorious deeds; let him now run the career of victory with the warriors of his country. And in this manner was Antar separated from the servants, and he attacked the tribes and made predatory excursions against them. And his brother Shiboob pointed out to him the hordes, and places of resort, and the fountains; and he never went on any expedition but he succeeded, and returned full of joy and content; so that his father Shedad became enriched, and all the noblest chieftains delighted in him.

He had now many friends, and many jealous enemies; amongst the latter were Prince Shas, and Rebia. And when they saw what great things Antar had done, their indignation against him increased, and they resolved on his destruction. In every society, the people, assembled round their wine, repeated Antar's verses, mentioned his actions,



and talked of his love for Ibla, and his discourses. This continued some time, till at length it reached the ears of Ibla's father and mother, and when they heard Antar's amorous poetry repeated, they ridiculed it, and would not receive him on friendly terms ; but showed their aversion to him, in every way, and made him perform every menial office ; for Antar, in their eyes, was only considered as a slave. But when the talk about Ibla gained ground, her mother ordered Ibla into the presence of her father, and sent also for Antar. So, you love my daughter Ibla, said she, and make verses upon her, and cannot conceal your feelings. Ibla was standing by her mother, and when she heard her speak to Antar, she smiled. This increased Antar's confusion, and he was much disordered, as it called forth all his love.

O mistress, said he, did you ever see any one who hated his mistress, particularly when his life and death were in her hands ! verily, I do love her, and my only wish in this world is to be near her : her form is ever before me, her name is ever in my heart and soul ; and I exalt in my verses, all that God has granted her of beauty and loveliness.

When Ibla heard Antar speak in her praise, her surprise increased, and Antar made great progress in her heart. If, said her mother to Antar, you are in earnest in what you say, let us hear some of your verses in praise of her



charms. Upon this, Antar hung down his head, and thus spoke :

“ I love thee with the love of a noble-born hero ;  
“ and I am content with thy imaginary phantom.  
“ Thou art my sovereign in my very blood, and my  
“ mistress ; and in thee is all my confidence. O Ibla,  
“ my description cannot portray thee, for thou  
“ comprehendest every perfection. Were I to say  
“ thy face is like the full moon of heaven, where  
“ in that full moon is the eye of the antelope ? Were  
“ I to say thy shape is like the branch of the Erak  
“ tree ; O thou shamest it in the grace of thy form.  
“ In thy forehead is my guide to truth ; and in thy  
“ night of thy tresses I wander astray. Thy teeth  
“ resemble stringed jewels ; but how can I liken  
“ them to lifeless pearls ? Thy bosom is created  
“ as an enchantment. O may God protect it ever in  
“ that perfection ! To be connected with thee is to  
“ be connected with every joy, but separated from  
“ all my world is the bond of thy connexion. Under  
“ thy veil is the rosebud of my life, and thine eyes  
“ are guarded with a multitude of arrows ; round  
“ thy tent is a lion warrior, the sword’s edge, and  
“ the spear’s point. O thy face is like the full moon  
“ of heaven, allied to light, but far from my hopes.”

When Antar ceased, Ibla and her mother were astonished, and their dislike towards him diminished ; and Ibla regarded him with affection. And Ibla’s mother said to Antar—I had no idea that you could



talk after this style, and speak with so much elegance and propriety: by the faith of a noble Arab, you are endowed with high and noble qualities. I intend to-night to speak to my husband, that he may marry you to Khemisa, Ibla's servant; who is the prettiest of all the girls of the place. Never, said Antar, will I be united to a woman who is a slave, and not free born; and never but with her my soul adores. May God, said Ibla, accomplish thy wishes; and may he grant thee the woman thou lovest, and mayest thou live in peace and happiness! Amen, Amen, Amen, replied Antar.

These verses were soon made known amongst the whole tribe, and men and women sang and repeated them. It happened about this time that Rebia gave an entertainment, to which he invited Shas, and Malik, Ibla's father, and his son Amroo, to come and eat, and drink wine; and when they became merry, the girls began to sing these verses. Do you not see how that slave is talked of? exclaimed Shas, how his name is renowned, and his character and fame are celebrated?

Thus they went on talking till Amroo became exceedingly angry. Death, O Chief, said he to Rebia, would be more tolerable to us than such proceedings. I have frequently spoken to my father to cast off this slave; but he says, the fellow is a slave, and the son of a slave, he is of no consequence; and were we to drive him out of our tents, King Zoheir



would take him, and encourage him against us, and then his avidity would only increase, and we should injure ourselves; for how can we presume to oppose King Zoheir? And then again, he enrages us by his verses. I have longed to kill him from the moment I heard that he mentioned my sister in his rhymes, let happen what may.

We have not invited you, said Rebia, to do any thing of this kind: who is this slave, that you should stain your sword with his blood? Let us consult on other means of killing him. I will to-morrow conceal twenty of the stoutest of my slaves, and will order them to kill him in the rocky precipices. My slave Basam is the brother of Zajir, and he has long wished to kill him: but I would not let him do it, for fear of the reproaches of King Zoheir; but now that his son Shas is with us, and takes a part in the affair, we shall be secure from blame. Then said Shas, I will assist you in word or deed, were even my father and brother and cousins to oppose me; and I will persevere in this enterprise, even if I were obliged to take a personal part in it; and I too will engage twenty of my slaves in it, to kill him by the cruellest death, and make an example of him. They did not break up the entertainment till Shas, Rebia, and Amroo had all three bound themselves by oath; and they arranged the forty slaves, all strong as lions, twenty from Shas, and twenty from Rebia.



Now Shedad had a daughter, and her name was Merweh, but not by Semeeah ; and she was married to a man called Jahjah, one of the tribe of Ghiftan, and he was a celebrated warrior. It happened that Jahjah had married his sister to one Magid, son of Leith, also one of the Ghiftan tribe ; and when the bridal festival was preparing amongst the Ghiftanians, Merweh came to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, with a party of women, to invite the females belonging to her father, and her uncles Malik and Zakmet-ool Jewad, and their relations amongst the tribe of Carad, to the feast. They accordingly obtained their husbands' permission to make the visit, and their husbands went with them. In front of the howdahs they sounded the cymbals, and the servants brandished their swords ; and Antar was among them, in attendance on Ibla and Semeeah, and the wives of his uncles. And when he assisted Ibla to alight and mount the howdah, he used to gratify himself in talking to her, and was mad in gazing on her charms ; and he was in hopes the journey would be long. Ibla's mother laughed at him, when she saw him assiduously attending on her daughter. Verily, said she, you love my daughter so much as to compose verses on her, and in description of her beauties. Yes, said Antar, by the God that has decorated the heavens, and raised them on high, and has adorned them with stars, were I able, I would make my eye her resting-place. They journeyed



on, and Antar walked before the howdah of Ibla, repeating these verses :

“ March the way of security. O thou, all my  
“ hope, proceed ; for he who encompasses thee is an  
“ intrepid warrior, that smites with his sword when  
“ the battle clashes. O Ibla, one look from the veil  
“ of thy eyelids is sufficient. Should I never attain  
“ my object in this world, the extended plains and  
“ mountains must press upon me.”

Thus they proceeded on their journey ; singing and playing, till the day was spent and darkness came on, when they dismounted in a spacious plain, near a pool of water. They ate and drank, and remained in that spot till it was day ; and just as Antar was ordering the slaves to raise the howdahs on the camels' backs, lo ! a great dust arose, spreading rapidly over the valleys and the mountains. In an instant there came forth a hundred slaves on horseback, and Arabs ; at their head was a horseman like an eagle, crying out,

“ This day will I be revenged ; verily I am the con-  
“ queror, and I will settle the business with my sword  
“ and my spear, on a slave of a tribe whom the Ab-  
“ sians regard not, but who listens not to one that  
“ chides him. How many men have I trampled down  
“ in the dust ! I am a valiant one, like whom there  
“ is no hero.”

As was before stated, Shas and Rebia had sworn to destroy Antar, and having placed their spies and scouts for that purpose, they stationed the forty



slaves, putting Basam at their head, just at the time that Merweh, the daughter of Shedad, happened to come by, and was returning home. The slave, with his comrades of the tribe of Ham, followed the party until they came to the valley of Ghifal, where they resolved to lie in ambush for Antar: when lo! the sound of horses' hoofs alarmed them, and heroes rushed upon them, crying out—Stop where ye are, or your skulls shall fly. Tell us who ye are, and of what tribe of Arabs, before we pour down destruction upon ye. On hearing this, Basam prepared his people for the attack: O Arabs, he replied, we are of the tribe of Abs, inhabitants of this country; but who are you, and why are ye halting in this place? Slaves of a coward race, cried the chief, we are in search of you, for amongst you is that accursed slave Antar, the son of Shedad.

Now these were Arabs and horsemen of the tribe of Moostalik, and their chief was called Vethab: he happened to be out of the way when Antar slew his brother, some time before; but when he returned, they informed him of it. He went forth to be revenged, exclaiming, Verily, a slave of the tribe of Abs has slain my brother, but I will destroy none but their King, and not return but with Antar's head. He thus met Basam, and all this occurred. And after some explanation; Know, O noble Sir, said Basam, our masters have sent us in search of you, that we may together hasten to kill this slave, and waylay him: here he has halted this



night. If ye wish, we will slay him, said Vethab, and we will give you his head; but if you prefer it, do you kill him, and give us his head. But swear you will not betray us.

Upon that, they promised and swore, and took engagements from one another. But Basam turned towards his comrades. Let us hide ourselves here, said he; but if ye perceive that they commit any injury to the property and families, we must then assail them too, till some people come to our aid, and thus we obtain our end in the death of Antar. However, we must in the attack remain in the rear, so that the women may not distinguish us, and know that we are amongst the enemy. Do what you please, said the slaves: and when the shades of night were dissolving, the party under Vethab poured down upon Antar like a cloud of waves, shouting out, To arms! to arms!

Then began the women to scream and weep. Antar cast his eyes towards Ibla, and she was bathed in tears: he looked at her mother, and her grief was great. Antar smiled, and presented himself before Ibla's mother. O mistress, said he, what think you of these our enemies? verily, they are eager for their prey. O Antar, said she, my force and spirits are exhausted; in a moment we shall be the prisoners of our enemies, and they will scatter us over this desert. O my mistress, said Antar, promise Ibla to me in marriage, and I will disperse your enemies at



a single onset. I will reduce them to annihilation ; and I will give you their horses and their armour as a dower. This is no time for merriment, said she. No, cried Antar, by the God of day, and the animator of souls : he that is God the merciful, and the Lord of victory, if you promise to marry her to me, I will make over to you these horses, and slay their masters. Defend her, said she, and she is yours. At the instant he turned round to Shiboob —Protect my rear, he cried, this day. Be of good cheer, thou black-born, exclaimed Shiboob, for I will bear two-thirds of thy troubles. Antar rushed forward, and assaulted them, roaring and shouting aloud ; and again he attacked them, and roared out. He encountered the first ranks, and met them with all-potent thrusts ; he struck them in their chests, and in their eyes. He slew the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth ; and behold, a horseman came down upon Antar from behind. As he was blustering over the plain, and just as he was about to transfix Antar with his spear, lo ! an arrow pierced his heart, and threw him from his horse. The terrible Shiboob dealt the fatal blow. When the party saw the state of the battle, they retreated from before him ; but he marking how the enemy were dispersed, came up to the women, and said to Ibla, Check thy tears, thou light of my eyes ; the man lives not that has harmed thee ! and thus he continued :



“ Check thy tears, for if thy heart is distressed,  
“ the noble lion of the den will protect thee. O Ibla,  
“ fear not, indulge no alarms, for my whole frame  
“ is labouring under the burden of its love; and I  
“ am a lion, to whom the warriors in the day of con-  
“ tention bow in submission, and whom the cowards  
“ dread. O Ibla, if persecution and absence must  
“ kill me, O that the bonds of meeting were loosened  
“ for ever. Verily, I will defend thee this day, O  
“ thou my only hope, for I have a sword whose blade  
“ cleaves the skulls. O Ibla, arise—behold my  
“ actions, and my deeds under the battle dust, when  
“ every warrior is hewn in pieces. Behold my ex-  
“ ploits when they attack and come on, and the sup-  
“ ports of their tribe are destroyed. The foe wishes  
“ to take thee captive, O thou my only hope. O Ibla,  
“ palsied is the hand that would take thee prisoner.  
“ I will steep my sword in their blood, and I will  
“ glut the birds, and the wolves, and the ghouls, with  
“ their carcasses. Here let all the world know that  
“ every foe of mine shall be overthrown under the  
“ dust of the battle.”

When Ibla heard Antar address her, she smiled with teeth more brilliant, and whiter than pearls, for she felt assured of his victory and conquest. Again he returned towards the foe, like a lion, and attacked them on the field of battle, scattering them to the right and to the left. Shiboob assisted him in the rear with his arrows, and the dust rose, and filled



the plain on all sides. The women were praying for Antar, and invoking the God of heaven. He was eagerly assailing the foe, like a lion, and slew thirty of their horsemen. His horse being completely exhausted, he dismounted, and vaulted on another charger; and whilst all this was passing, the slaves of the tribe of Abs looked on, and gazed in wild dismay and astonishment; but the chief Vethab, when he perceived his companions, and those that were overthrown, cried out to the survivors, I alone am his match; and he rode away to the field of battle, clothed in brilliant armour, a splendid sword on his loins, and a spear in his hand, and he thus exclaimed:

“ The vicissitudes of fortune, from the height of  
“ their mutability, are lanced against me, and every  
“ companion has abandoned me. The death of my  
“ tribe is at hand, from the arm of a slave who dis-  
“ regards his fate. It is no wonder when fortune  
“ raises up a poor wretch, that she should leave him  
“ in his infirmities a prey to the lions. O thou vile  
“ slave, that hast outstepped thy sphere, a warrior,  
“ one whom no words can describe, is come against  
“ thee. Away then with thy blind follies, thou son  
“ of Zebecba; for how many heroes have I de-  
“ stroyed at the moment of their attack!”

He had scarcely finished his verses when Antar answered him:

“ Thou wouldst abuse me, vile wretch, for that  
“ I am the colour of that night, whose dangers I



“ dare. If I am a slave, I have slain thy chiefs, and  
“ I have overwhelmed them with the vicissitudes of  
“ fortune. I am the assaulting lion : in the field of  
“ battle I rush impetuously when the coward turns  
“ away in flight. The firm-rooted mountains are  
“ uprooted at my vehemence, and let every one who  
“ dares to resist me be assured of death. How many  
“ heroes are punished as soon as the lustre of my  
“ horse’s front shines in the plain of war ! their hands  
“ instantly relinquish their arms, and they tumble  
“ on the surface of the earth, struggling with their  
“ limbs. How many warriors have I left stretched  
“ dead, gored with the spear-thrusts ! If thou art  
“ desirous to fight me, come on boldly to the hero  
“ who will make thee taste the food of death even  
“ from the tip of his fingers.”

He instantly assailed him, and struck him on the breast, and driving out his spear between his shoulders, he rushed among his comrades like a valiant lion, and gored their sides and their bosoms : and when they perceived that his assault was like a vivid flame of fire, they fled over the plains and the rocks. In the mean time, the slaves of Shas and Rebia seeing what Antar had done to the tribe of Moostalik, and how he was coming down upon them with a loud shout, and also Shiboob, quick as the flash of lightning, in his rear, they turned their backs and fled. Antar returned, the blood streaming from his spear. The women joined him, thanking and



praising him: and Ibla also came up to him, and smiled upon him. God protect thee, said she, thou black in face, but fair in deeds—thou ornament of men. He expressed his gratitude, and having replaced her on the howdah, and ordered the slaves to collect the scattered horses and dispersed cattle, and the spoils of the slain, he travelled on with the women till they reached the tribe of Ghiftan, and informed Shedad of all that had occurred with the enemy. Shedad gave him thanks, and kissed him between the eyes; he took him by the hand, and his anger was soothed. And when they were at the feast, Shedad wished to place him among the chiefs, but Antar would not consent; and he went away and joined the slaves; and all the chiefs were astonished at his modesty. They stood in awe of him, and raised his dignity; however, the elders and the youths came up to him, and made him sit down with them to drink wine, and treated him with all manner of kindness; and, in return, he recited various pieces of poetry, and they were greatly delighted; and for seven days they continued this civility and honour, and not a day passed but the families made their acknowledgments to Antar.

And the feast being concluded, the tribe of Abs sought their homes and their own habitations, and travelled till they reached the land of Shoorebah and Mount Saadi. When lo! loud cries and increasing shouts, and shrill screams, and clouds of dust, from



all directions assailed them. What misfortune, cried Shedad, what disasters have befallen us? They hastened away on their Arab steeds, and found their wives prisoners, and their daughters dishonoured. Loud and confused were their shrieks, and through the dust glared the dazzling brightness of swords: and the uproar of men was like the crash of thunder: and there was no one in the tents but a few men, and the sons of King Zoheir, all covered with wounds; and though they were still defending the property, they felt certain of drinking the cup of death.

Now the cause of this terrible event was, that King Zoheir had gone forth, accompanied by his warriors, against the land of Cahtan; for he was informed that Mooteghetris was coming down upon him with all his tribe; and it was Zoheir's intention to meet him at some distance, out of his own territories, and thus to prevent him from invading his country, and laying waste his lands. So he left his brother Zambaa with a small body of men, and departed; but chancing to miss the enemy on the road, Mooteghetris reached the country of Zoheir in safety, where he found the tents unprotected by warriors. He rushed against them, and the noble Absians rose to arms; and violent was the contention between them, and many brave men were left dead upon the plain, and the brightness of the day became black. Numbers thickened upon the Absians; loud and



piercing were the shrieks of the women, and slavery seemed their undoubted fate. Temadhur was taken prisoner, and also Modebilah, and Mekdada, and Jemana, and they were overwhelmed in misery and disgrace. At that hour arrived Antar and Shedad, and the horsemen of Carad, and they amounted in all to forty warriors.

Cousins, cried Shedad, come on to these dastards ! And they rushed forward, leaving the slaves with the women and children. O son of Zebeeba, cried Shedad to Antar, I wish to-day to see thee fight, that I may express my gratitude for thy noble deeds. O master, soon shalt thou observe what I do : he replied, Doubtless the chief of the tribe is here. Thou art right, said Shedad. They sought the enemy, and the whole plain trembled at their shouts : they shook their lances, and the women and servants shouted aloud, when they knew they were Absians coming to protect them. They attacked the right, and drove their left, and Antar assaulted the centre, plunging through confusion and horrors ; and thus he exclaimed :

“ This day will I raise a battle that shall humble  
“ the warriors of ages long past. I will make the  
“ blood to stream from their joints, when the skulls  
“ of the warriors leap from the blow of my sword.  
“ How many chiefs, when they see me eager in  
“ the fight, throw away their arms, and save them-  
“ selves by flight ! I am the bold one. As to the



“ fire of war, I kindle it, and hurl the tribes into  
“ punishments and death. Death, in the direful  
“ combat, fears me, when the battle-dust rises ; and  
“ the sand-cloud is like a blazing fire. My joy is in  
“ the encounter of heroes, when spears and swords  
“ clash in my grasp. How many battle-dusts have  
“ I dived into, fearless of calamities ! The joy of  
“ contests is my object ; it is all my desire. Verily,  
“ deeds will I perform unrivalled ; deeds that shall  
“ be recorded on leaves and books. I will raise the  
“ tumultuous din, and seas of blood : ’tis in their  
“ crimson billows that my gladness abounds. I  
“ will make the atmosphere like the sable night,  
“ when the dust clouds roll over the regions like a  
“ veil. No companion have I in battle but my horse  
“ and my sword ; and they complain of my fury ;  
“ they exalt me ; they subject death to me ; and I  
“ am exalted above all mankind in my father. My  
“ ambition soars above Pisces ; and my determination  
“ raises me above the Arab and the Persian.”

When Antar had ended, he shouted aloud to the combatants, and rushed madly into the midst of the enemy, and overthrew them ; he drove them before him over the plain : and the same did Shedad and his brothers on the left, and made them retreat in a shameful manner. After the flight, the Absians returned, and among the first was Zembaa, the son of Jazeemah : they raised their terrible shout, and they gladdened in the destruction of souls ; they



pointed their lances, they cried out to their noble steeds—spears clashed against spears. Antar alone broke through the right, whilst Shedad and the Absians destroyed the left; then the horsemen again retired in disgrace, and the plain seemed too confined for them. Mooteghetris beheld his horsemen in confusion and discomfited, and the left wing intermixed with the right; that they were driven by Antar like a herd of grazing camels, and that he was roaring in their ear like the crash of thunder. Alarmed at the approach of danger, he rushed down from an eminence with the people that remained with him, assaulting Antar with his warriors; and they all awaited patiently the attack.

Now Basam, the servant of Rebia, who had followed Antar that he might destroy him on his way to the tribe of Ghiftan, perceiving how he had slain the tribe of Moostalik, and also their chief, returned with his companions upon the day of this battle; and as he marked Antar's prowess on that occasion, he envied him in his heart, and, secretly designing to murder him, he assailed him, together with the party of Mooteghetris.

Antar encountered the enemy, and flinched not; and soon the storm of dust thickened, so that a father could not distinguish his son. Just then, Basam aimed his spear, and violently attacked Antar; for his accursed spirit was thinking of the renown he should gain by slaying him. He approached him,



and was eagerly watching his opportunity, when lo! an arrow shot through the back of Basam, and passed out by his chest; and he who slew Basam, and made him drink the cup of death, was the dreadful Shiboob. Now Antar had recommended Shiboob to protect Ibla: nor did he ever quit her till he perceived Basam issuing from the tents, followed by some Absians, whilst his brother was labouring to attain the standards. Shiboob was alarmed, and quitted Ibla, and ran after him. But Antar knew nothing of all this, and when he saw Basam, he was just about to do the deed, at the moment the arrow struck him dead.

Now Antar was occupied in destroying the enemy, and he stopped not till he came up to Mooteghetris in the fury of the fight; and he saw him driving back the troops, and beckoning with his lance to those who were flying from Antar like a flock of sheep: for his soul would not submit to flight; and he shouted, and rushed forward like the sea when it roars. And Antar received him as the parched up ground receives the first of the rain: he challenged him in a tremendous voice, and addressed him in the harshest terms; he pressed upon Mooteghetris, and closed upon him, and blocking up all means of escape, he thrust his spear through his bowels, and tore out his entrails; and when the horsemen saw that he was dead, they were disordered, and took to flight; and the spears of the Absians played upon



the fugitives till the evening, when they returned and collected the spoil of the cattle. Every where the victory was celebrated with triumph, and all united in praising Antar, and describing his heroic deeds; how he had slain Mooteghetris, and had annihilated his troops.



## CHAPTER III.

Now Shedad exceedingly gloried in Antar; aware that he had acquired new lustre by his actions, and not one remained to complain of him or abuse him. He ran up to Antar, and kissed him between the eyes. But Antar kissed his feet, and he appeared like the flower of the Judas tree,\* so completely was he smeared with the blood of the combatants. Shedad's affection for him increased, and he said to his brother Zakmet-ool Jewad, By the faith of an Arab, our education has not been lost upon Antar. How should he not be noble, he replied, you being the cause of his existence? and the Cadi of the Arabs decreed him to you, and told you he was of your loins: do not reject him, for he truly belongs to you.

Antar, as well as Shedad, heard these words, and he kept them secret in his heart; and he said not a word to any one; but in a short time, when they all repaired to their own tents, and separated each to his own family, and each collected his own party, Antar also retired to the house of his mother, and Shiboob was driving before him what came to his share of the plunder. And when the time of rest

\* *Cercis Siliquastrum*, the flowers of which are of a very bright purple colour, coming out from the branches and stem on every side, in large clusters, and on short peduncles.



drew near, he became sad and sorrowful, and the house being entirely empty of people and neighbours, O my mother, said he, I have heard words to-day, the meaning of which I cannot comprehend ; I wish you would explain them to me, and tell me who is my father, that I may know who brought me up. I will inform you of all that, said she ; so she then told him how Shedad had met her in the desert, and how all the ten had sought for her, and how he had repulsed them, and made them agree to give her to him, as his share : how they afterwards quarrelled about him, and went before the Cadi of the Arabs, who had decided that he belonged to Shedad. Well then, said he to her, O mother, if the Cadi decided that I was his son, and the ten have also agreed that I was sprung from his loins, why does he not call me his son, as every one else does ? This would cost him dear, said she, and he cannot resolve on that, because he says you are a base-born ; and he is afraid of the disgrace he should incur by giving you the rank and honours of a son ; and the Arabs would not consent to it.

I would not permit that to be the case, he replied, for whoever would bring shame upon him, I would soon reduce to annihilation. But if Shedad still denies me my right and rank, I will use my sword and spear upon him ; and should I perceive that the tribe dare despise me, I will level my scimitar at the whole of them, and I will go to another tribe,



who may better understand my value ; for how often have I rescued them from their dangers, and liberated them from perils ! I will begin by striking off the head of Shedad, if he does not acknowledge my rank and condition ; and so will I treat also my uncle, if he does not give me Ibla in marriage ; him too will I make to drink the wine of disgrace. For Heaven's sake, said his mother, do nothing of the kind, for they will only hate you the more, and you will gain nothing : but the men and women love you, I perceive, on account of your noble deeds, therefore proceed to no extremities, otherwise you will increase their hatred and enmity against you. But, my mother, added Antar, my aunt has once promised to give Ibla to me in marriage, and has engaged herself by contract to that purpose. Hush ! said Zebeeba, talk not of impossibilities ; this will never happen : how can a slave, without connexion or rank, aspire to marriage with an Arab woman ; particularly as you were brought up tending the sheep and the camels ? O mother, said Antar, I will show thee wonders : my soul pants for honour and dignity, and with my sword will I dishonour the necks of the Arab chieftains.

Thus they continued to talk till morning dawned, when King Zoheir returned. He could scarcely believe that his family were preserved safe from ignominy, for he had heard that Mooteghetris had passed him on the road ; and severe indeed was his



anxiety and affliction at having thus missed his foes. He marched, therefore, day and night, till he reached his own country, and found all his people happy and secure.

But when the tribe of Abs saw their king returning with all his army and troops, the chiefs and nobles went out to meet him, and having congratulated him and prayed for his long life, they explained to him the destruction of his enemies, and all the heroic acts of Antar; how he had slain Mooteghetris, and what noble feats he had performed. Verily, said King Zoheir, we are ennobled in him above all Arabs: we have not appreciated his worth, and have not properly understood his greatness. Truly, he will become the champion of this whole nation, if he live long, and all the horsemen will be under his authority and command.

King Zoheir proceeded to his own tents, and found his women exulting in the deeds of Antar: he afterwards entered his wife Temadhur's apartments, and found her also praising Antar in heart and speech, as she exclaimed, O King, it is not Antar, but a noble warrior; for he has done the deeds of a hero. Thus was Antar's dignity raised in the eyes of King Zoheir. Were we to decree to him our lives and our property, said he, it would still be a small return for such exalted acts. He soon after ordered some sheep and fat cattle to be killed, and having directed the meat to be served



up, and the wine to flow, he went out into the middle of the camp, and there erected a large tent of velvet and silk, and placed in the centre a throne of ivory, inlaid with burnished gold. The horsemen then presented themselves: Rebia and his brother attended, and each seated himself according to his rank; Shedad also came, and all his valiant dependants; Antar too entered, and kissed the ground, and made obeisance, and prayed for a continuance of Zoheir's glory. He was going to sit down amongst the slaves, but King Zoheir said to him, By the Mover of the heavens, no one shall be my companion to-day but you, and no one shall eat and drink but I and you. And he made Antar come towards him. O King, said Antar, as he kissed his hand, I am but your slave. Then King Zoheir got up from his throne, and seated him by his side, and talked to him: and all present had their eyes upon him, and all his friends rejoiced; but Rebia and Shas, and his uncle Malik, were bursting with rage, when they saw Antar raised to such honour, never conferred on any one before.

Now the cups of wine were handed round, and the delicacies were eaten with joy and pleasure; and they appeared secure from the vicissitudes of fortune, whilst King Zoheir conversed familiarly with Antar, and joked with him: he placed him by his side, and made him drink. And they continued in this manner till the wine sported with the senses



of the guests, and all of them, and Antar too, stood up, but the King prevented him; and when they wished to depart, the King gave Antar a beautiful robe, and mounted him on an Arab horse, and a necklace of burnished gold, studded with pearls and jewels; he presented him also with an excellent sword; and Antar quitted the tents of King Zoheir clothed in that superb robe and cloak, and mounted on the Arab horse. But he soon dismounted, and walked by the side of his father; and when they entered the tent, Antar kissed his father's feet: O master, said he, why do you not grant me my due, as others far and near have done? or bestow on me what I so much desire? Tell me, said Shedad, what you want, make known what you wish, that I may be kind to you; I will not avariciously refuse you. Now Shedad thought he wanted a camel to ride, or a tent to live in, or a female slave to attend him. But Antar replied, I request of you, O master, that the rank and dignity of an Arab be appropriated to me; and that you would acknowledge me as your son, and yourself as my father, so that my rank may be made known, and I become a chief; and in truth, I will reward you as no one else can. I will reduce the Arab princes themselves to your obedience, through fear of my sword and my spear.

When Antar had finished speaking, Shedad's eyes started into the crown of his head, his affections cooled, and his disorder of mind increased. Thou



base-born ! he cried, hast thou forgotten that thou hast tended the camels and the sheep, and collected the ordure of beasts amongst the mountains ? Thou son of a slave, verily, the robe of King Zoheir plays about thy loins, and his words float upon thine ears ; thou hast indeed made a demand, and hast raised thyself on high ; and thou wouldst make me a by-word with every one that should hear thee : nothing have I for thee but a sword, and I will cut off thy head. Upon this, Shedad drew his sword, as soon as he had finished, and rushed at him, and all the slaves ran away from him.

Now Semeeah, Shedad's wife, overheard the dispute, and came out of her tent, crying and lamenting. She rushed instantly towards her husband, and kissed his bosom, and took his sword out of his hand, as she exclaimed—Never shall you slay him ; me shall you destroy before him. I have not forgotten his virtues and noble deeds. Excess of wine must have urged him to this fancy : therefore do not punish him for what he has said. Semeeah did not desist till she had soothed his anger, and he retired to his tent.

But Antar was in the greatest agony ; he was ashamed that the day should dawn upon him, or that he should remain any longer in the country ; or that he should again look his father in the face. He accordingly went out, and sought the residence of Malik, the King's son : his clothes trailed upon the ground through shame, and his tears flowed



from the excessive pain he endured, for intoxication had overpowered his judgment. So he sought Prince Malik, who was just then returned from his father's, and quite rejoiced at what had passed with respect to Antar, and the robes and presents he had received. At this moment a slave came in, and said, Antar wishes to be admitted into your presence. Let him in, said Malik; and when he was introduced, Prince Malik looked at him, and saw his tears flowing from his tortured heart. He seated him by him, and talked familiarly with him, and asked him what was the matter, and what had happened to him. O my lord, he replied, I demanded of my father the rank and honour of an Arab; but he has abused me, and beaten me, and wished to kill me, and has made me a laughing-stock among the Arab chiefs.

You have been wrong, said Malik to Antar, in this sad affair; you have done that which would not, at any rate, have induced him to acknowledge you. Do not, my lord, continued Antar, reprove my ambition, which often robs me of my wits and discretion; but had I not been blinded with wine, this would not have happened, and I should have concealed my wishes, and submitted patiently to my misfortunes, till death had overtaken me. But in all circumstances thou art ever my master. Ah! my lord, continued he, how often have I relieved them from their foes, and no one ever assisted me! Know too, that I love Ibla, the daughter of my uncle Malik; and she drives away the sleep from my eye-



lids, and in my sleepless nights I am united to her; but my father Shedad has cut off all my hope, and misfortunes upon misfortunes overpower me. I only demanded to be recognized as his son, that I might be united to her; but truly all hopes of her are completely destroyed. No joy now remains for me, and the light of the day is the darkness of night in my eyes. I have no home but among the wild beasts and the reptiles. His agony increased, and he wept, and complained bitterly. Sorrows and afflictions were multiplied upon him, and the tears rushed into his eyes, as he expressed his anguish and passion.

Had you informed me of your situation before, said Malik, greatly distressed, and pitying him, I would have sacrificed my person and property to remedy it. But what was easy has now become difficult; Ibla will be concealed from you from this day forward. I fear also that your father will contrive to kill you, and that no one will be able to relieve you. But stay here whilst I tell all this to my father. - O my lord, said Antar, the only place of rest for me is on the highways; and I must roam about the whole day and the live-long night; for men have conspired to destroy me, such as Rebia and your brother Shas. He passed the whole night with Malik, and at the dawn of day Antar mounted his horse, and put on his armour and his cuirass. He travelled on till he was far from the tents, and he knew not whither he was going: sometimes he



took the left and sometimes the right, and again he struck into the wilds and deserts, till it became broad day. There he wandered about the rocks and mountains, and accusing fate, he thus expressed himself:

“ I rail against fortune, that relents to no up-  
“ braider, and I demand security from the cruelties  
“ of fortune. She one day promises fair, and excites  
“ my pride; but truly I know all her promises are  
“ false. I have served man, and I have taken my  
“ relations as protectors against fortune; but they  
“ have acted like scorpions. Amongst themselves  
“ they call me the son of Zebeeba, but in the  
“ tumultuous rush of horsemen, I am the son of  
“ nobles. Were it not for my love, one like me  
“ would not humble himself to such as they; and  
“ the lion of the waste would not fear the foxes.  
“ Quickly my tribe will remember me, when the  
“ horsemen come charging amongst the warriors  
“ with their sword-blows. O that thy phantom  
“ would visit me, O Ibla; it would see the torrents  
“ of tears that stream from my eyelids. But I will  
“ forbear, that my railers may have pity on me, and  
“ that my patience may soften their hearts. Thy  
“ station is a post in the centre of heaven, but my  
“ hand fails in attaining the stars.”

Thus he roamed from the high road without friend or companion. The next day the tribe heard all that had passed between Antar and his father:





and early in the morning Prince Malik sent for Antar ; but he was not to be found : he supposed he would return by the evening : still he came not. Now Prince Malik was sincerely attached to Antar ; he was sorely grieved, and he did all he could to find him. He then acquainted his father with what had passed. As soon as the King heard the account from his son, he was much vexed, and reproached him. O my son, said he, why did you not immediately tell me of this, that I might have arranged the business ? I concealed it, said he, in order not to occasion any disturbance, and for fear of exciting your indignation, for I have long seen my brother Shas hates him as the vilest of men ; and Rebia will not raise his head towards him ; and I see also that many of their friends detest him. But you love him, and are interested about him ; and I could not possibly tell you what you would not have approved. In the meantime Antar continued to wander over the plains of the desert, until the day shone, when, behold ! there arose a great cloud of dust, that darkened the country. Antar contemplated it for some time, and then perceived forty horsemen, each bearing a quivering spear, and a dazzling scimitar. He directed his horse towards them, and they proved to be of the noble tribe of Abs, and Gheyadh, the son of Nasshib, was their leader. When Antar saw them, he saluted them, and they returned the salutation : O thou son of



Zebeebah said they, why art thou straying here ? I was hunting game, he replied, and when I saw you, I made towards you, in order to bear you company. And we, said Gheyadh, have always distinguished you from the other slaves, and have always considered you in the light of a valiant knight ; and if you will join us, we will agree to your sharing with us as a noble warrior. But how can that be ? said Antar. Know that a slave, said Gheyadh, enjoys a half share with his masters. But, said one of them, Antar truly deserves more than two-thirds, and happen what will, he is a knight ; and indeed not every one that is called a knight is a knight. They at length agreed that they would surrender to the slave a fourth of whatever plunder they might take.

In this manner they proceeded till they approached the land of the tribe of Cahtan, where they saw a great quantity of cattle, with some high-raised tents and lofty pavilions ; many horses running about, and camels grazing, and the people unsuspecting of a reverse of fortune. Here, my cousins, said Gheyadh, is a rich tribe, and the people few in number : let us attack and despoil them whilst it is dark, and we will quit their country in safety ; before morning we shall be far away among the wastes. They instantly shook their lances in their hands, and drew their brilliant falchions ; and as they drove the camels and the horses from the tents



and the habitations, the men mounted to keep them off from the women and families. But the sons of Abs<sup>h</sup> forced them back towards the tents, and trampled them down upon the ground, seizing their property and spoil. Antar rushed down upon them, and obliged them to fly. Do you, said Gheyadh to Antar, drive away the cattle, and we will repulse all that dare pursue them.

Antar drove away the cattle, and had proceeded some way, when lo ! a knight rushed out from the ravines in the rocks, mounted on a dark-coloured colt, beautiful and compact, and it was of a race much prized among the Arabs : his hoofs were as flat as the beaten coin ; when he neighed, he seemed as if about to speak, and his ears like quills ; his sire was Wasil, and his dam Hemama. When Antar cast his eyes upon the horse, and observed his speed and his paces, and his uncommon beauty, he felt that no horse could surpass them, so his whole heart and soul longed for it. The Absians, indeed, had plundered the horde and the country, but Antar's mind was occupied with the horse, so he galloped on till he approached the horseman ; and when the knight perceived that Antar was making towards him, he spurred his horse, and it fled beneath him ; for this was a renowned horseman, called Harith, the son of Obad, and he was a valiant hero.

Antar galloped after him till sunset, and he found himself far separated from his party. Harith then



turned about to him ; and when he was quite close, said Antar to him, O young man, by the faith you profess and believe, will you not wait for me awhile, and grant me a favour ? for I see you are a noble horseman. Hear what I have to say, and give me an answer : I will be answerable for thy security.

O young man, said Harith, trusting to his promise, what do you want ? I see you also are a valiant knight. Will you sell me this horse you are riding, asked Antar, or will you give it me, if you are the owner of it ? By heavens, young man, said Harith smiling, had you so accosted me at first, I would have given him to you, with some camels also, and you need not have acted thus ; but, Arab, did you ever see any one surrender his horse and his armour in a plain like this, alone and a stranger ? and particularly a horse like mine, whose lineage is as well known as that of the noblest warriors ; for should his master be in difficulties, he will liberate him ; he moves and flies without wings ; and if you have not heard of his fame, I will tell you—he is called Abjer, whom Chosroe and the Grecian emperors and the princes of the tribe of Asfar\* have anxiously wished to possess. I was angry with my own people, and repaired to this noble tribe. I ate with them, and remained with them a long time. It costs me much to part with this horse, but my heart

\* Beni Asfar, supposed to be the descendants of Esau, Christians and Europeans.—*D'Herbelot*.



is attached to this tribe, and is greatly distressed about them. I am no coward in the assault of heroes; but I was afraid lest this horse might receive a blow that should injure him, and I therefore only followed you, in order to draw off your attention till the men of the tribe might overtake you, and pursue you over the hills and the wilds, and that I might point out to them your course; for you have invaded a tribe where there are only women, and but a few men, unable to encounter so fierce a foe; and I do not perceive there is a single feeling heart among you all.

Harith having ceased speaking, I much wish you would sell me this horse, said Antar; demand what you please from me, for I must be the purchaser of it. O young man, said Harith, if you are indeed desirous of a horse, that is in this age beyond all value, I will not sell it but for all your booty; and then be assured you will not lose by the bargain. I swear by the God who knows all secrets, I do not avoid fighting you from the fear of death, for I am a warrior, and can defend myself; but I feared this horse would be injured. If you, young man, wish to strike a bargain, and act like a man of honour, as I am a guest of this tribe, and have eaten with them, my wish is to ransom their property with my horse; and had it not been for this misfortune, I never would have parted with such an animal.

When Antar heard these words, he felt certain



that Harith was a liberal minded man, and therefore, wishing to be on a par with him in respect to his honourable and generous conduct: Well, said he, I will purchase of you this horse for this booty; and I shall be moreover exceedingly obliged: here is my hand in faith and sincerity.

Harith dismounted from the back of his noble steed, and gave him to Antar, who mounted him like a king of the land far and wide; and he told the slaves to conduct the cattle and women and servants to their own country. Harith took them, and went his way.

Now Antar upon Abjer watched them till they had disappeared among the deserts; and just then came up the Absian horsemen, and Gheyadh at their head, who, seeing Antar standing alone in the plain, without any of the booty, cried out, Thou son of a base slave woman, where is the plunder? I bought with it this horse, he replied, and I have established your honour and credit in the land of the tribe; because I saw the owner was a man of worth, and jealous of the honour of women, gracious and liberal minded: I was therefore anxious to equal him in propriety of conduct, and would not leave behind us in this land the remembrance of a foul action, and be a scandal amongst Arabs. It is the most ignominious of deeds to take prisoners free born women; and besides this, the spacious plain is open before us, and the



Lord God is the bestower of all things, and the taker away; he is the distributer of every thing; and God forbid he should send us back without a reward.

Thou base born, cried Gheyadh, in reply to Antar the lion-hero, we consigned them over to your care, but you have been buying, bartering, and selling, without asking our leave. What is done is done, said Antar; I will make it good to you elsewhere, if the Creator of all things pleases, and you agree to the protection I have granted: but if you wish to quarrel with me, I will protect my life with the force of this sword, and this well proportioned spear, and I will not live to forfeit my word.

Come on to this wretch, said Gheyadh, inflamed with rage, to his companions; cut him in pieces with your cleaving scimitars, and make him drink of the cup of death and annihilation.

Upon that, Antar went to a little distance from them, and dismounting from Abjer, tightened his girths, and then mounting again, galloped and charged about, crying out to them, You base born wretches, to-day will I show you how I fight and thrust. - Away, away, to shame and disgrace—this day you shall behold the furious lion. He thought of his beloved, and thus exclaimed.

“ I abuse fortune, that never softens at the voice  
“ of the counsellor. I conceal my passion in my  
“ heart, but my tears disclose it. My tribe is leagued



“ with fortune to seek my blood, and they assault  
“ me with sword and spear. They have driven me  
“ from the mistress I love, and I am plunged into  
“ the well of the water of banishment. To expose my  
“ cherished life is indifferent to me; and though I am  
“ separated from her, my heart clings to her. O my  
“ God, let not my life be a life of ignominy! let not  
“ my death, O God, be among the weeping crowd!  
“ but my corpse! let the birds hover over it, and  
“ let the crows of the desert drink of my wounds.  
“ God regards the man who is hospitable to his  
“ tribe, and who becomes among them a chief in  
“ authority. But when they see us invade their  
“ dwellings, every warrior on a swift-paced steed,  
“ they promise us riches, and high-bosomed damsels  
“ with well formed hips, and beautifully-shaped  
“ haunches. I will seize them on my horse, whose  
“ like exists not; ay, and the youth sold it like a  
“ man of honour. Whoever of ye, oh tribe of Abs,  
“ wishes my death, I will appear before him in the  
“ plain of battle, and I will charge among ye on my  
“ stern-faced steed, and I will rush at ye as the  
“ lion of the wilds.”

When the Absians heard Antar's discourse, they all shrunk from the conflict, and consulting with each other, said, Gheyadh, What stops you? and what occasions this fear and consternation at this black slave? O Gheyadh, said they, you have advised us to make the attack, and still you hold



back from the assault and the combat ; you are our superior and our adviser, so come on. O my cousins, said Gheyadh, much troubled, wise is the man between whom and Antar there is no contention. Explain this, said they, ere we endanger our lives in a contest with him. I observed, said he, when he dismounted to tighten his girths, his gigantic mien, his brawny arms, his full-formed legs, and his cool undaunted eye. And I, said another, saw something more extraordinary than that. What's that ? said they. One day King Zoheir gave him one of his finest horses ; he went up to it to put on the bridle ; the horse would not take it, but was riotous, and reared at him. At the instant Antar lifted him off the ground up to the top of his head, and dashed him on the earth, and smashed his bones. When they heard this account of Antar, they trembled, and were afraid. Do you go up to him, said they, addressing Gheyadh, give him the plunder, and do not make it appear that we are afraid of him, that his avidity may not increase to our detriment, and he say, I will not quit one of ye till I have slain him and taken his spoil.

So Gheyadh went up to him ; O my cousin, said he, are you not ashamed to engage in battle against your cousins, when they were only joking and making merry ? My cousins, said Antar, convinced they were afraid of him, I would not do any thing that could be thought wrong, but I have purchased



this horse, who will carry me against your enemies ; and you know that when a person seeks to destroy another, it is necessary to defend one's self. Gheyadh continued to speak flatteringly to Antar, till he softened him and cajoled him. O Arab Chieftains, said Antar, I have not forgotten your kindness, and I am but your slave. I am grateful for all you have done for me, and had it not been for you, I should not be known among the Arabs.

It was not fear that dictated these words, but in order to observe their sentiments towards him.

He has indeed purchased this horse, said Gheyadh to his comrades, in order to destroy our enemies ; let us therefore grant it him. Be it so, said they all. Thus Antar became possessed of Abjer, whose equal no prince or emperor possessed. By way of precaution, Antar kept aloof from Gheyadh and his companions, who went on talking to each other. How that base-born has succeeded to his wish, said they, for verily that horse is worth his weight in gold ; we shall indeed be disgraced among the Arabs ! Antar proceeded on before them, and heard all they said.

Now they continued their march till evening, when they reached a spot abounding in trees and streams ; wide and extensive were the surrounding plains. They dismounted and let their horses graze, and seated themselves, whilst Antar stood watch over them, for their and his own safety. They did not



move from this spot till morning dawned, when they mounted their horses and marched till evening; when suddenly from the upper part of the desert a great dust appeared, and through it they distinguished a lofty howdah, and on its top there was a crescent of gold. The howdah was richly ornamented with velvet; in front were damsels and slaves, and they wore robes of divers colours, and behind were horsemen mounted on steeds all of different colours. No sooner saw they this procession and these fine garments, than they were sure it was a bride in the howdah; but they knew not her husband, nor any one connected with her. This is our plunder, said they; God has sent it to us in recompense for what has befallen us. They instantly bent their heads over their saddle-bows, and violently assaulted the party, and got possession of the howdah and all its accompaniments. But when the horsemen that attended the howdah beheld them, they attacked them, and man met man, and hero assaulted hero; blood was shed and spilt, and the horror was great: and in a moment the Absians were assisted by the deeds of Antar, the devouring lion, for his attack was the attack of an overpowering warrior. And three score and ten were the horsemen that accompanied the bride: he destroyed sixty of them; and the rest fled, five to the right and five to the left.

The Absians having taken possession of the how-



dah and the property, with the dispersed cattle, and a vast quantity of articles besides, asked the slaves about the bride, who was her husband, and who her father? Arabs, said they, she is called Amima, the daughter of Yezid, the son of Handhalah, surnamed the Blood-drinker, the chief of all the princes of Tey; and her husband, to whom she is going, is called Nakid, the son of Jellah, a warlike and bold horseman, the protector of the race of Marah; and you have executed this villanous act of violence upon us, and have ventured on this hazardous enterprise!

They proceeded, and passed over the deserts and the wilds, the lady weeping and lamenting at the misfortune that had overwhelmed her. But when Antar heard from the slave this account of her father and her husband, he was convinced he would come down on her account, and that a great battle and slaughter would ensue between them, and he wished the Absians should feel his power and weight, for what he had heard them say about himself. So he came toward them. God has granted you victory and safety, said he: And thou too, they answered; he has also given thee cause to rejoice. You are aware, said Antar, that this plunder is much more valuable and precious than the former; let us put it out in lots and divide it, and let us give to each his portion, that he may defend it with his soul and body.



You, Antar, took the first plunder for yourself alone, said one, and do you demand your share of the second? With respect to the first plunder, O my cousins, said Antar, did you not give it me? and it is not customary with chiefs to take back their donations. The fellow, said Gheyadh, is right in what he says; divide the spoil, and give him half of one of your shares. Arabs, treat me fairly, cried Antar, and speak the truth. Gheyadh got into a passion; What do you mean? said he. According to our agreement, said Antar, which was settled between you and me, of all the plunder we should take, I was to have one half of the whole; and all of you the other half.

Rage filled the heart of Gheyadh. Thou son of Zebeeba, thy avarice demands impossibilities; thou art indeed mad, and a villain. Verily thou hast not kept thy word; and O, had the day never come that we met thee in this road! No one, said Antar, is mad, but he who keeps company with you, and agrees to your demands; for ye are a set of fellows of little justice, and great oppression and violence: the fact is, I will not take a jot less than one half of the plunder, even were my soul to drink of the cup of death. Come on, on to this black slave, cried Gheyadh to his friends, who rebels, and outrages us. Upon this they all jumped up, and cried out against Antar, resolved to kill him, and make him drink of the cup of perdition. Antar



went apart from them for a while into the rocky plain, then galloped, and challenged them to the contest, thus addressing them:—

“ When my foe sues me for a debt, I settle the  
“ debt with the Redeinian spear\*: my scimitar’s  
“ edge shall extirpate ye all, and shall justly decide  
“ between you and me. I am exalted by my  
“ sword and spear far above the minutest stars and  
“ the two bears. Foul wretches! ye know not my  
“ power, but the inhabitants of the two hemispheres  
“ shall feel it. The grasp of fortune has not de-  
“ stroyed my strength, and the fingers of time have  
“ not been stretched out against me. Many a  
“ horseman have I left sprawling, his cheeks gro-  
“ veling, his hands dyed in blood, whilst the birds  
“ of death hover round him, and the magpies  
“ assemble over his corpse.”

His verses finished, he was about to attack them, when, lo! a dust arose and covered the whole country. In a short time the cloud opened and discovered three hundred horsemen, all clad in steel, and the father of the damsel, the Blood-drinker, appeared in front of them. He roared like a lion; his sword was an Indian blade. Whither would ye flee, O ye base-born? he cried out—I am he, sur-named the Blood-drinker, the Cahtanian.

Now the cause of the arrival of these men was

\* Redeini—the name of the wife of a famous spear-maker.



this: out of the ten that escaped by flight from the combat, five went to the father of the damsel, the lion of the land, and five went to Nakid, the son of Jellah; but the residence of her father happened to be the nearest. So he set off with three hundred men, all stern lions, and he galloped on till he overtook the Absians, as we have mentioned; and it was he who prevented the combat between the Absians and Antar.

When Antar saw the father of the damsel coming on—See where the heroes advance, he cried; now protect your plunder, if ye are men of valour: no portion is mine, neither great nor small, not a camel or a sheep. I will quit you, and will neither be with you nor against you. He spurred away his Abjer from them, and mounted to the top of a high hill; he took his feet out of the stirrups, and sat cross-legged upon the neck of his horse, resting on his dreadful spear, and there he remained contemplating the terrors of the approaching conflict.

The Blood-drinker cried aloud to his warriors; and they rushed down upon the Absians, and men encountered men, heroes heroes; and blood was spilt and shed. In a moment swords clashed, every heart and feeling were roused; heads flew off like balls, and hands like leaves of trees. The Teyans rushed upon the race of Abs; also the Blood-drinker assailed them in his courage, and released his daughter. The Absians quitted their plunder, for



their souls could not stand firm; and they fled over the wilds.

Now when Antar perceived this defeat, he replaced his feet in the stirrups, and raising his spear from the ground, pounced down from the height like an eagle, or a wild beast when it rushes from its den; and he roared out to them in a loud voice that made the mountains rebellow—O ye ignoble dastards, I am Antar, the son of Shedad! And he urged on Abjer, who started under him like a flash of lightning, or a tearing arrow: his eyeballs turned red, and foam issued from his lips: he shrieked aloud in front of the horses, and immediately they shrunk back on their haunches, and hurled their riders from their backs: and the heroes were scattered over the desert and the wilderness. In less than an hour he drove them from the plunder. As soon as the Absians heard the sound of Antar from under the cloud of dust,—Verily, Antar, the magnanimous warrior, will overcome them, said they; may God assist him! This is indeed true intrepidity, and he deserves half the spoil; for if the heroes drink the cup of death, the greatest share will fall to him, for verily the eye of the sun cannot be concealed. Thus their hearts were purified towards Antar, and they all returned to fight by his side.

When the Blood-drinker saw the Absians resume the contest, he said to the people about him, The



horsemen of Abs and Adnan are coming down, and this day will they bring death and destruction upon us; and he let the reins hang loose, and fled. The Teyans spread themselves over the plains and the desert, following him in every direction, whilst Antar, having already slain about eighty men, approached the plunder; and when all were fled, the Absian horsemen came up, and there was not one but praised and thanked him. So they took up the spoil, and the property, and the prisoners, and the bride, and departed, seeking the land of the tribe of Abs, and rejoicing in their victory and triumph; every one in astonishment at Antar's intrepidity.

But as soon as the other five that fled informed Nakid, the husband of the bride, the light became dark in his eyes, and he shouted out to the tribe of Maan—To horse! to horse! and ere an hour had passed, five thousand valiant horsemen were mounted; and he marched at the head of them, in hopes of overtaking the race of Abs, and of overwhelming them in perdition and death, and of rooting out every vestige of them, so that not a record of them should exist. For indeed he was a warrior ferocious as a lion, one of the thousand heroes in those days of darkness. He travelled on night and day, that he might overtake the tribe of Abs before they could reach their own country. Meanwhile they pursued their journey, seeking their own lands, when a dust



arose behind them, and darkened the whole region : it opened, and discovered the Maanites headed by Nakid. At this sight they were convinced of their destruction and death, as they said one to another, Verily the tribe of Maan have overtaken us ! They looked towards Antar, and they perceived him smiling and rejoicing at the arrival of the warriors. Verily, said they, O my cousin, the foe is come up with us, and to-day will our booty be torn away, and our skulls will fly off. Know, my cousins, said Antar, that death will not be wanting, neither will it increase ; but I have long wished for such a day as this, for I have not given up the tribe of Abs : my heart is fixed on returning home ; and this fortunate circumstance has happened to us by the will of Him who disposes life and death. Now is the flame of war at hand, and sorrow and anguish are approaching. Whoever amongst you is ready to fight, let him fight ; whoever wishes to fly, let him fly ; but for me, I will drink of their cups ; I will contend with their heroes : and thus he continued in verse :

“ This day the race of Abs shall behold my combat, and my actions in the contest when I charge.  
“ I will seize their property : ay, and the double of  
“ it with my supple, quick-moving, death-bearing  
“ spear. I will destroy the brave in war with my Indian blade, and I will drive down among them like  
“ a devouring lion. I will rave among their horse-



“men with my unconquered courage, and I will  
“charge, and I will rush over them in the battle.  
“I am the Knight of Knights, the lion whom none  
“can withstand. The lions in their dens tremble  
“at me, and in the day of battle the ghouls fly  
“from me.”

When Antar had finished, he encountered the warriors with penetrating thrusts and rending blows. The Absians were obliged to endure it with him, and to assist him in the horrors. The messengers of death were distributed amongst the conquerors and the conquered; the sharp-edged swords came in contact with them, and the straight lances glided through them. The Absians repented of their firmness, and fled over the plains, whilst alone Antar encountered the whole calamity; and he stood firm, like one resolved to avert shame and disgrace. He aimed at the breasts of the heroes with overpowering assaults and thrusts, that would have made the deep-rooted mountains totter.

When Nakid saw the battle of Antar, and how alone he stood against five thousand, and was making them drink of the cup of death and perdition, he was overwhelmed with astonishment at his deeds. Thou valiant slave, he cried, how potent is thine arm—how strong is thy wrist! And he rushed down upon Antar, that his bride might behold a proof of his courage: and Antar, seeing that he was making at him, presented himself before him, for he was all anxiety to meet him. O thou base-born, cried Na-



kid, son of an uncircumcised mother ! But Antar permitted him not to finish his speech, before he assaulted him with the assault of a lion, and roared at him : he was horrified and paralysed at the sight of Antar. Antar attacked him, scared and petrified, and struck him with his sword on the head, and cleft him down to the back, and he fell, cut in twain, from the horse, and he was split in two as if by a scale ; and as Antar dealt the blow, he cried out, O by Abs ! O by Adnan ! I am the lover of Ibla.

No sooner did the tribe of Maan behold Antar's blow, than every one was seized with fear and dismay. The whole five thousand made an attack like the attack of a single man ; but Antar received them as the parched ground receives the first of the rain, exhibiting to them his power and his courage. His eyeballs were fiery red, and foam issued from the corners of his lips ; wherever he smote, he cleft the head ; every warrior he assailed he annihilated ; and as the warriors still pressed on him, he tore a rider from the back of his horse, he heaved him on high, and whirling him in the air, struck down a second with him, and the two instantly expired. By thine eyes, O Ibla, he cried, to-day will I destroy this whole race. Thus he proceeded until he terrified the warriors, and hurled them into woe and disgrace, hewing off their arms and their joints. At length the five thousand retreated from the combat, for fear and terror had completely shaken them, and more



than nine hundred horsemen he had slain, and gained an entire victory over them.

Just as Antar had nearly annihilated them, there appeared a dust that darkened the whole land. In an hour it was cleared, and there came forth a troop of heroes; at their head was a horseman like an eagle, mounted on a horse that moved like a cloud. The rider was handsome, in the bloom of youth, and every tongue cried out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! Now this knight was Malik, King Zoheir's son. And he was coming in search of Antar, in consequence of the affair that took place between Antar and his father, who, when he demanded the rank and consideration of a son, wished to put him to death. Now Malik was expecting Antar the next day, but as he came not, he went and acquainted his father the King with all that had happened. Zoheir instantly sent for Shedad, who kissed the ground. Why do you not grant Antar's request, and call him your son, as every one else does? asked King Zoheir: Think you, Shedad, that amongst the tribes of Cahtan and Adnan there is a more intrepid warrior than your son Antar, or a bolder heart than his? O my Lord, answered Shedad, he is indeed my son, and a part of my heart; but my brother Malik said to me, If you acknowledge Antar as your son, I will abandon myself to the Arab tribes; therefore, on account of my brother Malik, I have renounced him. Well, then, said Zoheir, I will have him return to his country in spite of his foes. And



he despatched a slave to gain information, and to follow him. He waited until the slave returned, and told him that Antar had associated himself with Gheyadh, the son of Nashid, and at that moment he was, single-handed, engaged with five thousand horsemen, and Nakid, the son of Jellah. Malik wept. May God, said he, prosper him, for he has devoted himself to death and destruction; never will he fly or retreat: but by the life of my father, King Zoheir, I must aid him; and if he is dead, never will I return till I have taken vengeance on his foes, and made his murderers drink of the loathsome cup. He set out, and appeared as we have just mentioned, and rushed forward with his troops as we have described.

But as soon as Malik and his people came forward, and the men had recognised each other, Antar felt his power expanded, for at that moment the enemy had resolved to slay his heroes. But at the sight of his friend Malik and his warriors, his heart revived, and he exhibited the whole courage of his soul; he again made a most desperate attack upon his antagonists, and overwhelmed them in total ruin.

When the tribe of Maan saw Antar's destructive force, and his sweeping blows, and that the Absians were come to his assistance, their only resource was flight, and retreat over the plains and wilds; for they said to each other, When Antar was alone, we could not resist him; what shall we do now, that the tribe of Abs and Adnan are come to his aid? So they took to flight, and ran away in confusion; whilst



Antar and the tribe of Abs having pursued them for three parasangs, returned for the scattered cattle and dispersed horses. Antar dismounted from Abjer, and running up to his friend Malik, wished to kiss his feet in the stirrup, but Malik would not permit him, and kissed him between the eyes, and rejoiced in his safety. And there was not one of the Absians but came up to Antar, and congratulated him on his victory and triumph. Antar thanked them. They halted there that night, and the next day they set out seeking their own country : Antar riding by the side of Malik, and relating to him all his adventures with Gheyadh and his companions, and how he obtained his horse Abjer. Malik informed him of all that had passed between him and King Zoheir, how he had sent after his father Shedad, and had threatened him. Antar was glad, and foreboded well, and felt convinced that his marriage might take place as long as King Zoheir was on his side : so that his love for Ibla increased. They thus proceeded on their journey till they came near to their homes ; when Antar's passion seizing him, he thus exclaimed :

“ When the breezes blow from Mount Saadi,  
“ their freshness calms the fire of my love and transports. Let my tribe remember I have preserved  
“ their faith ; but they feel not my worth, and preserve not their engagements with me. Were there  
“ not a maid settled in the tents, why should I prefer



“ their society to absence? Slimly made is she, and  
“ the magic influence of her eye preserves the bones  
“ of a corpse from entering the tomb. The sun, as  
“ it sets, turns towards her, and says, Darkness ob-  
“ scures the land; do thou rise in my absence: and  
“ the brilliant moon calls out to her, Come forth, for  
“ thy face is like me when I am at the full, and in  
“ all my glory! The Tamarisk trees complain of  
“ her in the morn and the eve, and say, Away, thou  
“ waning beauty, thou form of the laurel! She  
“ turns away abashed, and throws aside her veil, and  
“ the roses are scattered from her soft fresh cheeks.  
“ She draws her sword from the glances of her eye-  
“ lashes, sharp and penetrating as the blade of her  
“ forefathers, and with it her eyes commit murder,  
“ though it be sheathed: is it not surprising that a  
“ sheathed sword should be so sharp against its vic-  
“ tims? Graceful is every limb, slender her waist,  
“ love-beaming are her glances, waving is her form.  
“ The damsel passes the night with musk under her  
“ veil, and its fragrance is increased by the still  
“ fresher essence of her breath. The lustre of day  
“ sparkles from her forehead, and by the dark shades  
“ of her curling ringlets night itself is driven away.  
“ When she smiles, between her teeth is a moisture  
“ composed of wine, of rain, and of honey. Her throat  
“ complains of the darkness of her necklaces. Alas!  
“ alas! the effects of that throat and that neck-  
“ lace! Will fortune ever, O daughter of Malik,



“ ever bless me with thy embrace, that would cure  
“ my heart of the sorrows of love? If my eye could  
“ see her baggage camels, and her family, I would  
“ rub my cheeks on the hoofs of her camels. I will  
“ kiss the earth where thou art; mayhap the fire  
“ of my love and ecstasy may be quenched. Shall  
“ thou and I ever meet as formerly on Mount  
“ Saadi? or will the messenger com from thee to  
“ announce thy meeting, or will he relate that thou  
“ art in the land of Nejd? Shall we meet in the  
“ land of Shooreba and Hima, and shall we live in  
“ joy and in happiness? I am the well known Antar,  
“ the chief of his tribe, and I shall die: but when  
“ I am gone, history shall tell of me.”

Antar's eloquence and greatness of soul made the Prince's heart bound with joy, for not an Arab amongst the neighbouring or distant tribes could equal him. Verily, said Malik, the spirit of God animates you, and inspires your mind; for you have attained the full expression of words, and are perfect in rhymes. They went on, passing over the wilds and the deserts, until they approached their own country, when Malik sent forward one of his men to give notice of his coming. The messenger preceded them, and informed King Zoheir of the approach of his son, and of Antar the bold warrior; at which being greatly rejoiced, he went out with all his noble comrades, except Rebia and Shas, to meet them: for these two were not pleased at the return of Antar; and Malik also, the father of Ibla, would



not congratulate him. But Shedad mounted with King Zoheir, and went to meet Antar, for his heart yearned after him. Thus they proceeded, and did not stop till they met the Prince and Antar; and when they came near, Antar dismounted, and hastening towards him, kissed the hand of King Zoheir. But the King bent down towards him and kissed him between the eyes, and congratulated him on his safety. Think you, O Antar, said he, that we have forgotten you since you quitted us in anger? Could our homes give us any pleasure when thou wert absent, and hadst abandoned thy country?

O King, replied Antar, having kissed the King's feet, thou whose command is obeyed among the whole nation of Arabs, O high minded Prince! I swear by your unbounded generosity and your noble mind, my departure was not the effect of passion: I am but a lowly slave and dependant; I did indeed depart the night I had been with your majesty, for my tongue had swerved from the road of propriety towards my father; my ambition aimed at impossibilities, and I demanded what in fact only a fool would have demanded. As soon as I was safe from his vengeance, and his kindness and favour were withdrawn from me, I could not, after such a fault, do otherwise than change my home; till at last my lord Malik interested himself so much about me, and delivered me from death and perdition; he has also informed me what interest you have taken in me: so that my situation is improved, and I am



reconciled to my master Shedad ; and you have loaded me with obligations mountains could not sustain. May you ever be under the protection of God ! Thus Antar went on talking with the King, when Shedad coming up to him, Antar ran towards him and kissed his feet in the stirrup, thus saying :

“ O my Lord, I am come begging forgiveness ;  
“ the slave is come like a criminal ; the sword and  
“ war-horse would fail, should presumption ever  
“ bear sway.”

When Shedad heard these words, and saw his humility, and considered all he had done, and his wonderful intrepidity, and truly Arabian nobleness of soul, all his affections were excited ; and his eyes almost shed tears as he said in his heart, May God curse every one who from this day forward would renounce him, and may the sword despoil his life ! He kissed him between the eyes, and Antar walked before his father, after he had saluted his uncles, and his relations. The whole tribe of Abs were astonished at his noble conduct and courage, and they said one to another, No one possesses what his masters possess.

Now Antar felt no unworthy thought of fear respecting his father or his uncles, and only the passion that humbles warriors humbled him. Malik presented the plunder to his father, and pressed him to accept it ; and he divided the cuirasses, and armour, and horses, and coats of mail among the tribe of Abs who were with him at first. But King Zoheir



took Amima to his own tent, saying, This is a Princess, and the daughter of a King; it is not proper that she should be bought and sold. Thus they all departed home after the King had made up matters between Antar and his family and relations, and recommended him to their kindness. The King soon after heard from Antar an account of all his adventures, and how he had obtained his horse Abjer. And when he looked at him he was more and more surprised at his qualities; and he said to his son Malik, This horse has been made for no one but Antar. And from that day he was surnamed Aboolfawaris \*.

Now Ibla's father addressed his son, saying, My son, verily death would be preferable to this state of things: how is it that this slave of ours, one whom we employed in tending our flocks, is now raised far in dignity above us with our King? And this it is that makes him so presumptuous with us and your sister Ibla, and thus will our honour be debased. There is nothing else to be done, said Amroo, but to marry my sister Ibla to one who can protect her against him, and then let us depart from this land; for King Zoheir and his sons are strong in his favour. But, said his father, O my son, must we leave this slave safe and well? No, by the faith of an Arab, we must contrive his death. So they all retired to their tents, and were united to their families.

\* Father of horsemen.



Now Antar came to his mother Zebeeba. Why, my son, said she, do you not by my side tend the flocks and the camels? It would be more agreeable to my heart than all this intrepidity and boldness, which every day expose your life to perils and dangers. Antar smiled at her sayings; O mother, he replied, thou shalt see in thy son Antar what shall be registered and recorded.

Antar gave away to his father and his uncles all the plunder he had obtained; though this was not his own idea, but at the instigation of Prince Malik. This Prince, when they were all established in their tents, related to his father and his brothers all he had seen Antar perform, and his undaunted conduct. The King took great pleasure in what he told of Antar, and being very desirous of hearing all he said both in verse and prose, ordered Antar into his presence, who, as soon as he arrived, made obeisance, and prayed for a continuance of the King's power and beneficence. Zoheir and his sons welcomed him, and the King made him sit down by him, and supplied him with wine; and his kindness for him increased. Aboolfawaris, said he, I wish to hear from yourself the account of your expedition, and what happened to you, with your comrades, for my son Malik has related some of your hardy deeds, and has repeated some of your poetry; but there is no reporter of words and acts like the actor himself. Upon that, Antar commenced, and told them all that occurred with Gheyadh and



his comrades; how he happened to associate with them, and how he agreed to their proposal of giving him half of all they should gain, and how they wished to kill him for buying the horse Abjer, and how they gave up their design on hearing his verses and discourse. Will you, said King Zoheir, let us hear the verses you made on your mistress Ibla, when you came nigh home?

“ When the breezes blow from Mount Saadi,  
“ their freshness cools the fire of my love and my  
“ transport.” And he continued the repetition, till he came to this part, “ She is elegantly formed,  
“ and the soft magic of her eyes would arrest the  
“ bones of a corpse from entering the tomb.”

When Antar had finished, the King's astonishment and delight were unbounded at his eloquence; and he turned towards his brother Asyed, and said, O my brother, I wish you would pay attention to Antar, and write down all he says, that we may be reckoned amongst the most eloquent Arabs for poetry and propriety of conduct. They continued to drink their wine, and the hours passed in mirth and pleasure. But when Shas saw that his father became so exceedingly kind to Antar, his agony and distress of mind increased, and from the excess of his indignation his heart was near bursting; however, he resisted till Antar accidentally left the tent for a while. When Shas being alone, turned round to his father; Indeed, my father, said he, this black slave, this base-born, has brought indelible shame.



upon us, and it is all on account of his love of Ibla, the daughter of Malik; and you also approve his conduct; but verily the whole tribe will be shocked with his presumption when they hear his verses.

The King was exceedingly angry, and wrath appeared in his countenance. My son, said he, what sayst thou? Who is able to thwart the decrees of Providence? Perhaps God has resolved to testify in him his divine favours! And know, my son, the most ignorant of men is an envious man. Now Antar just then entered, and as he had overheard all their conversation, he thus spoke:—

“ This flame is for Ibla, O my friend, her lustre  
“ illumines the darkest night. She blazes—her  
“ form is in my heart, and the fire of love is in my  
“ soul. Her gently waving form has kindled it,  
“ like the branches whose motion refreshes the  
“ breeze. Her breath diffuses a lively odour, and  
“ in her perfumes I pass the night in paradise.  
“ She is a maid whose breath is sweeter than  
“ honey, whenever she sips the juice of the grape.  
“ When I taste a coolness from her lips, she leaves  
“ in my mouth a hot burning flame. The moon  
“ has stolen her charms, and the antelope has borrowed the magic of her eyes. O grant me thy  
“ embrace, O light of my eyes, and save me from  
“ thy absence, and mine own griefs. Be just, if thou  
“ wishest, or persecute me; for in thee is my paradise, and in thee is my hell. No happiness is  
“ there for me in my troubles, but my lord, who is



“ called the generous Zoheir. Wherever he goes,  
“ death anticipates him; and he destroys his foes  
“ before he meets them. Let them not abuse him if  
“ he aid a solitary creature, who spends the live-long  
“ night without sleep, and in tears. He is my sup-  
“ port and stay against those who, when they see  
“ my exaltation, would trouble me the more. He  
“ is a King to whose name Princes shall bow, and  
“ shall point at him to pay their homage. He is the  
“ asylum of all who refer to him to dissipate their  
“ sorrows, as he relieves my griefs. May fortune  
“ never deprive me of my King! May he ever live  
“ in the purest joy and felicity!”

The King was so pleased with Antar, that he said,  
O Aboolfawaris, whatever I can give you for your  
poetry will be an insufficient return; even were I to  
give all I possess; for my property will pass away  
as if it had never been, but thy praises will endure  
for ever. And as he presented him two virgin slaves,  
beautiful as moons, and two rows of large jewels,  
and some perfumes, he added, Aboolfawaris, you  
have often mentioned me in your poetry; it would  
be disgraceful in me to let you go away from me  
unrewarded, so calm thy heart and cheer thine eye;  
for by the faith of an Arab, I will not be separated  
from you until you obtain every thing you wish,  
and accomplish all your desires. Did you belong to  
me, I would admit you to my rank and connexions,  
in spite of the blame the Arabs might heap on me.

Shas could not endure this, and rose up and



quitted the place, but Antar remained drinking with the King till the evening, when he arose, and his hand was in the hand of Prince Malik ; and they all departed from the tents, and went their way each to his own dwelling. Antar did not stop till he reached the habitations of the family of Carad, where he perceived a very strong light : he understood it not, but he went towards it and entered his mother's tent, and asked what was the reason of this light at such an hour. Know, my son, said she, the men of the camp are absent ; they are gone with your master Shedad, and with him are also ten horsemen after the cattle, in order that they may release them from some Arabs ; and the women are watching to this hour in the expectation of seeing you, that you may relate to them what has happened to you in your expeditions ; and Ibla the daughter of Malik is more delighted than any of them.

When Antar heard the words of his mother, he joyed in his heart, and a smile lighted up his countenance. So he immediately arose and sought the dwellings of his uncles, and entered the women's apartments. As soon as they saw him they arose and received him, and saluted him. Semeeah kissed him. O Antar, said she, you have been with the King from the beginning of the day, and we are sitting up on your account. O my mistress, said Antar, I knew nothing of it, but had I known it, I would not have tarried, had my legs been even tied and fettered ; and he thus addressed them :



“Darkness hovers over, and my tears stream down  
“in copious torrents. I conceal my love, and com-  
“plain to no one. I pass the night, regarding the  
“stars of night in my distraction, and the tears rush  
“violently from my eyes like a hail-storm. Ask  
“the night of me, and it will tell thee that I am  
“indeed the ally of sorrow and anguish. I live  
“desolate, there is no one like me; a lover without  
“friends or a companion! I am the friend of sor-  
“row and desire. I am o’erwhelmed by them, and  
“I am worn out with patience and trials in my  
“grief. I complain to God of my afflictions and  
“my love; and to no one else do I complain.”

Ibla heard these verses, and perceived his tears and distress and his sorrow: she pitied him; and as she remarked the violence of his tears, they interceded greatly for him, for she loved him for his courage and his eloquence; and as she noticed him with the flattering soothing expressions,—Where, said she, is my share of the plunder; or am I now of no consequence or value to thee? At these words the sight of her beauty and loveliness overpowered him. O my mistress, cried he, by the light of thine eyes and the black of thine eyebrows, to me the most sacred of oaths, thy slave Antar has obtained of plunder neither a small nor a large portion, but the whole I have given to thy father and thy uncles. So he presented her the two slave girls and the two strings of jewels that King Zoheir had given him; and he added—The perfumes thou hast no occasion



for ; thy breath is more delicious and more heavenly ; thy perfume is sweeter and more luscious. So he divided the perfumes between the wives of his father and his uncles. And to his questions about his father and his uncles, whither they were gone ?

Know, Antar, said Semeeah, that your master told us that there is a horseman of Yemen, called Kais, the son of Dibgan, and under his subjection are the lands of Senaa and Aden ; he has at this time invaded the land of Hejaz with forty horsemen : he is now on his return, and with him an immense plunder, and he is seeking his own country. Shedad inquired of the peasants who gave him this information, where Kais was to rest this night and sleep : they told him at the lake of Jaree, in the country of Doom. Then said Shedad, By the faith of an Arab, I will go against him in the dark, and will attack him and take his plunder from him, and will reduce him to shame and disgrace ; and if there should be a thousand horsemen, I will not permit the tribe of Cahtan to escape with plunder taken from the land of Abs and Adnan. He accordingly mounted, and took with him ten horsemen, and he set out to follow their track.

When Antar heard this, he got up without delay, and kissing the mother of Ibla, and also Ibla between the eyes—This is the kiss of farewell, said he, for I know not when we shall meet again : and having eased his heart by gazing upon her, he returned to his mother, and put on his armour and his cuirass :



he mounted his horse, and taking Shiboob with him, he departed in quest of his father and his uncles. And when they had advanced some way, said Shiboob to him—O my brother, a female slave of my master Shedad said to me—Tell your brother Antar to be on his guard against his father Shedad and his uncles, for they have resolved on putting him to death. This Ibla heard from her brother Amroo and her father Malik, and told Semeeah, and directed her to warn you of it: now I have told you, be on your guard. Run on, O Ebe reah\*! was Antar's reply. He urged forward Abjer, and they went on for some time till it became very hot, when a horseman met them coming from the centre of the plain. Antar marked him, and behold he was one of the men that had accompanied Shedad, and he was covered with wounds. When they came nearer to him, said Antar, Where is the plunder? O Aboolfawaris, he replied, I have received these wounds which you see in my body on account of it, for truly we sallied out with your master Shedad at night-fall, that we might overtake Kais, the son of Dibgan, and when we came up with him, we saw him carefully guarding his spoil. As soon as he perceived us he started up, he shouted out and assaulted us with the vehemence of a lion; first he speared me, then

\* Shiboob's nickname, signifying "Father of the Winds," in allusion to his speed. There are many of these nicknames, some of which admit of no translation.



after me your father Shedad: I have returned to seek you and bring you; so if you wish to overtake them, make haste, and if you rescue them 'twill be nobly done.

By the faith of an Arab, exclaimed Antar, never will I return till I have destroyed the whole party with my sword, and have liberated my father and my uncles; and I will drive the whole plunder before me: so away home, and I will revenge you. Aboolfawaris, he replied, I am not able to retain my seat on the back of my horse. So Antar ordered Shiboob to place him by the side of a pool of water. Shiboob came to him and placed him by the side of the lake, and tied up his horse, where they quitted him, and proceeded over the plains and deserts until the day closed, when they came up with Kais and his prisoners that were marching before him, Kais following them with his comrades. As soon as Antar saw his father and his uncles tied across their horses, he indeed knew not then the heavens from the earth, and he gave a shout that made the mountains tremble. Ye ignoble dastards! Quit your plunder. Come on! Slaughter is the word!

No sooner heard Kais the shout of Antar, than he was alarmed and confounded; he pricked on his horse, and turned round upon Antar; but Antar cried out to him—Son of Dibgan, who has urged thee against the warriors of Abs and Adnan, whom none shall attack but the eagles shall devour his



flesh? Thou vilest of Negroes, cried Kais, thou shalt soon see that I am a man not to be wearied in the contest of spears; and as he fell on Antar like the fall of fate and destiny, he thus burst forth:

“ I am renowned in every nation for the thrust  
“ of the spear and the blow of the sword. I am the  
“ destroyer of horsemen with the lance, when the  
“ spears are interwoven under the dust. How  
“ many contests have I waged on the day of battle,  
“ whose terrors would turn grey the head of in-  
“ fants! Long ago have I drank the blood of horse-  
“ men, with which they fed me before I was weaned.  
“ This day will I prove my words when the blood  
“ streams from my sword. This foul wretch I will  
“ slay with the edge of my sword, that cleaves  
“ through the flesh before the bones. His dwell-  
“ ings shall this eve be found waste and desolate,  
“ and I will not swerve from my word: his body  
“ shall lie on the deserts, cut down, and his face  
“ thou mayst see groveling in the dust.”

As soon as Antar heard this speech of Kais, son of Dibgan, Silence, said he; may thy mother bewail thee! and thus he replied to him:

“ Verily, thy spirit has urged thee to abuse me,  
“ and thou hast spoken the words of a vile dastard:  
“ thou art ignorant of my exploits in every battle,  
“ from the land of Irak to the sacred shrine: thou  
“ shalt have no time to reply, no justice but the  
“ sword; for ignorance among mankind is a trait  
“ that conducts the ignorant to their death. This



“ is the scene of conflict, and in it doubtless will be  
“ proved the skill of the coward and the base-born.  
“ Let him repent who has only shown his vanity,  
“ and let him prefer flight to resistance. I am  
“ Antar, and my name is far spread for the thrust  
“ of my spear and the blow of my sword.”

When Antar had finished, equally impetuous was his assault: he drew forth his scimitar, and struck him between the eyes, and split his helmet and wadding, and his sword worked down to his thighs, down even to the back of the horse; and he cried out—Thou wretch, I will not be controlled—I am the lover of Ibla. Thus Kais and his horse fell down, cut into four pieces!

When Shedad and Malik and his son Amroo saw what Antar had done, they trembled and were afraid, and from that day a dread of Antar filled their hearts. But Antar rushed amongst the remainder like a devouring lion. When the tribe of Dibgan perceived the force of Antar's blows, and how he overthrew their chief, and split him and his horse into four pieces, they wheeled about their horses and fled. Antar pursued them, and having slain twenty of their men, returned. He roared even as a lion in his wrath;—he took possession of the plunder; he released his father, his uncles, and the other horsemen, and they all rejoiced in their delivery, except Malik and Amroo his son, who said:—Oh! that we had fallen by the sword, rather than be rescued by Antar, the slave of Shedad!



But they concealed their anguish, and appeared to be stout of heart, and thankful to Antar, though, in fact, their galls burst with spite. They drove forward the plunder, and returned seeking their own country, whilst Antar embraced his father and uncles, and thus spoke :

“ As I approach my friends, my transports increase, and on their account my cheeks are bedewed with tears. This day I march towards them, and I am surrounded by the chiefs of my tribe. I have slain the son of Dibgan, a lion in battle, and with my Indian scimitar I have cured my pains. I have engaged to cleanse their hearts from sorrow. I have rescued my tribe, and that is my dearest reward. My companions, whenever I march by night, are my sword and my spear ; and the dæmons of the earth dread my vehemence. O Ibla, how many horsemen have I raised up on my double-edged cleaving scimitar in my strength ! O Ibla, how many horsemen, in the midst of the war throng, as soon as I come, fling away their arms in fear of me ! Ask every lion hero of my exploits ; they will tell thee every lion is terrified at my violence. My tribe abuse me that I am black ; but my deeds in battle are fairer than the dawn. If I wish, I will seize whole countries and subjugate them, and all the princes of the earth are within my grasp.”

Thus they travelled on till they came to the pool near which Shiboob left the wounded man, and they



saw that he was dead ; they were exceedingly grieved. Verily, said Shedad, we have lost horsemen more valuable than the plunder !

Now that plain was very extensive, and as evening was advancing, they halted till midnight, and then departed, seeking their own country, where they arrived in the morning : and they met King Zoheir at the lake of Zatoool-irsad, and with him were his sons, and Rebia, son of Zeead. As soon as they saw the King, they hastened to him, and saluting him, laid the plunder before him, and told him what Antar had done, how he had joined them, and liberated them from misery and destruction, and had slain Kais, and dispersed part of the tribe of Cahtan. Confer this great obligation then, on thy son, he so longs for, said Zoheir to Shedad, that you may be rewarded by his great actions, and be ennobled by his sword to after gerneations.

Rebia, Shas, and Malik, Ibla's father, and his son Amroo, were greatly enraged at this proposal ; but Prince Malik, the friend of Antar, rejoiced.

He then divided the spoil in equal portions, but out of respect for Antar would not take even a halter. And Antar immediately presented the whole of it to his father and his uncles ; and all the tribe of Abs were astonished at his noble conduct and filial love. Zoheir sacrificed camels and sheep, and ordered a feast to be prepared, and as they ate and drank, King Zoheir turned towards Antar and



said, recite, Aboolfawaris, some of thy verses; and he thus complied:

“ May fortune bring thee every wish of thy heart,  
“ live in peace, for every result will secure thy  
“ comfort! This is the lake whose residence thou  
“ hast sweetened; and were it not for thee, its  
“ rain fraught with exhalations would not fall upon  
“ us. Thou art present, and all its herbs are  
“ green or yellow, and all their wonders and charms  
“ are expanded before us. The breeze of musk  
“ wafts the essence of its flowers, and it smiles from  
“ east to west. O then, let us do it ample justice  
“ with wine; let us mix it till its banks o’erflow.  
“ Let us drink with thee out of cups of joy, and  
“ let us hold up thy train, thou lord of honour!  
“ Thy countenance is decked in smiles, laughter  
“ lives in thy teeth, and there is a sword whose  
“ blows draw the blood of thy foes. O do not  
“ then reproach me if I weep for Hima, when I  
“ call to mind the friends that dwell there, and its  
“ neighbours. In my heart is an ever burning  
“ flame, but I am ever in alarm about these dear  
“ warriors and these tents. Over the extent of the  
“ waste are marvellously rich canopies, and the  
“ whole is ornamented with fine curtains of Grecian  
“ velvet, painted with every surprising form, that I  
“ am amazed at their starry brilliancy. My heart  
“ was in agony the day they quitted Hima, but it  
“ soon returned to hail its royal master. Should it



“ be said amongst the people—Who is the most  
“ determined hero? What youth is ennobled high  
“ o’er the rest? We will say it is Zoheir, illustrious  
“ in his birth, towering above all men, who can  
“ never attain his eminence. His exploits avert  
“ from us the obscurity of night, and all is lumi-  
“ nous, and his star is one mass of onyx. May he  
“ ever succeed in every enterprise; may death ever  
“ march wherever his armies march.”

These verses delighted the King. May God never renounce thy mouth, or man do thee harm, said he. By the faith of an Arab, thou art one of the wonders of the world; and he continued to praise and thank him; when lo! a great dust arose, and there appeared a hundred horsemen, all clothed in steel, headed by a Knight like a lofty date tree on an elephant; on his head was a turban of Kufian cloth, and over his shoulders a painted mantle of Grecian fabric; beneath him was an Arabian steed; they came down towards the lake, and when they reached it, the foremost rank stopped short, and their leader dismounted, and presented himself before King Zoheir, bowing before him. His tears began to flow, and with a heart rent with anguish he thus addressed him:

“ O thou, the defender and protector, be my  
“ defence and support against mine enemies. Thou  
“ art the defender of orphans, and thy beneficence  
“ heals the wounded spirit. Fortune has over-  
“ whelmed me, my bosom bursts, and my soul is



“ full of grief. A perfidious-minded oppressor has  
“ overpowered us with his strength, and has  
“ violated our virgins. Wherever he goes, death  
“ precedes him, so he destroys his foes before he  
“ presents himself. Protect us from his violence  
“ before all our women are dragged prisoners by  
“ their hair.”



## CHAPTER IV.

THE suppliant had not finished his intreaties, ere Prince Malik sprang towards him, and throwing his arms round his neck, O my brother, said he, may God never permit thy eyes to weep! What is it that has called forth thy grief? Now this suppliant was Prince Malik's foster-brother, and his name was Hassan the Mazinite. The King had taken the mother of this youth a prisoner from the tribe of Mazin; he was an infant at her breast, and as his father was slain in the affair, King Zoheir carried her away, and as Temadhur had just then brought forth Prince Malik, she consigned her child to her, desiring her to suckle the infant with her own child. So she remained with her a long time, and suckled and weaned her son and Prince Malik together, till her sister, who had heard of her, came to her, and pressed her exceedingly to return home. She asked permission of Temadhur, who granted it, and gave her and her sister many very valuable presents. She then departed with her sister for her native land, and employed herself in educating her son Hassan, until he grew up and his limbs strengthened, for in him was the essence of the noble



tribe of Mazin. And he became a blazing flame, and a fiery thunderbolt, and the tribe of Mazin loved him for his courage, and they made him the protector of their land.

And Hassan's sudden arrival at King Zoheir's tent was occasioned by the following circumstance. Hassan had a maternal uncle, whose name was Nedjim the Mazinite, and he had a daughter perfectly beautiful and lovely, and her form was symmetry itself. Hassan was in love with her, but he never ventured to demand her in marriage, till a man of the name of Awef, the son of Alkem, of the tribe of Terjem, presented himself one day to his uncle. He was also a renowned horseman, and a valiant hero, rich in property and cattle. And when he came, his uncle invited him to a feast, and slew camels and sheep, and poured out wine for him; and when the liquor began to play about the head of Awef, he threw himself at his feet, and demanded his daughter, and won him by his wealth and riches. Hassan was present, and when he perceived that if he remained silent, his cousin would be betrothed to another, he started up and eagerly exclaimed: O my uncle, do not marry thy daughter to this man, for I am to be preferred to him on account of my rank and consideration: never will I permit the daughter of my uncle to quit her tent for a stranger's, were my limbs to be torn asunder! Ignoble wretch, cried Awef, canst thou presume to address, where I have already



put in a claim? for thou art numbered amongst the herd of orphans\*.

Wert thou not in mine uncle's tent, replied Hassan, I would soon tear off thy head, and silence thy existence. And if thou wouldst boast of thy wealth, know, that all the property of the Arabs is mine, and in the grasp of my hand; and if thou wouldst domineer over me with thy courage, come, let us to the field! that I may make an example of thee amongst the horsemen.

At these words the light became dark in the eyes of Awef: he instantly sprang on his horse's back, and Hassan did the same; and they both rushed to the plain, and dashed at each other, and the earth quivered under the feet of their horses, and all the tribe of Mazin sallied out to see the result of the battle and contention. Naeema, the daughter of Nedjim, was there, with many other women. And when Hassan observed his cousin, and that she was viewing the engagement, he instantly seized his antagonist and grappled him, and pressing him hard, stopped all means of escape; then catching hold of the rings of his coat of mail, he made him his prisoner, dashed him on the ground, and almost smashed him to atoms. He instantly dismounted to cut off his head; but his uncle

\* Young orphans did not inherit at the death of their fathers; all property belonged to the tribe: as they had not laboured, they had not merited. However this does not appear to have been an invariable rule.



sprang towards him, saying, O my son, let him go, accept of my intercession, for he has eaten of my meat and been under my protection. So Hassan admitted his uncle's interference, and pardoned him. Awef quitted the tribe of Mazin, for shame and mortification overwhelmed him; and the event was spread among the Arab tribes, and every one stood in awe of Hassan.

About that time a female slave came to Hassan. Your uncle, said she, has been just saying to his wife, Verily Hassan is a valiant and a brave fellow, but he has not wherewithal to keep up an establishment, and I fear, should I give him my daughter, she will be reduced to penury and difficulties with him. As soon as Hassan heard this, he assembled all the men in whom he could confide, and took them away, and he went in search of plunder from some of the Arab hordes.

Now, among the Arab tribes of Cahtan, there was a King whose name was Oosak, and he was one of the thousand warriors of that period of ignorance, who could engage a thousand heroes at once. He had at his command an intrepid army; but a famine having wasted his lands, he departed with his troops and his armies, and attacked the land of the tribe of Mazin, amongst whom he settled. And it happened that as he rode out one day, and was amusing himself by the streams and the fountains, he rode on till he came to a pool of water, when it happened by fate



and destiny, from which there is for man no retreat or escape, that on that day Naeema, the daughter of the uncle of Hassan (who with his friends was gone to procure a dower for her) came also to the lake. Oosak, as he looked at her and the young girls employed in their games and amusements, distinguished Naeema, for her face was brilliant like the moon when it is full; and as she was smiling, with her teeth like rows of pearls, and as the weight of her haunches prevented her from standing up, Oosak was quite surprised, and his senses failed him. But the women turning towards him perceived Oosak looking at them, so they all surrounded Naeema. O brother Arab, they exclaimed, are you not ashamed of this action, thus to come and stare at the daughters of warriors?

Oosak smiled and laughed at what they said, and called out to an old woman who was with them, and asked her about the damsel. Whose daughter is she? Whether she was a virgin or a married woman? This is Naeema, the daughter of Nedjim, said she, and unmarried. When Oosak heard this, his love and passion increased. He staid quiet that night, but as soon as the day dawned, he sent to Nedjim to demand his daughter in marriage. But Nedjim refused him, saying—Verily, I have but one daughter, and have affianced her to my nephew Hassan, who is now on an expedition, seeking a dower for her. I cannot therefore dispose of her,



for he is a horseman that would not put up with such an affront, and also a man of a harsh disposition. The messenger reported this to Oosak, who swore in his wrath that he would not take her but as a captive, and that he would pour down death and destruction on the whole tribe of Mazin.

About that time arrived Hassan, bringing with him immense wealth ; and as soon as he approached the dwelling, he gave to his uncle the marriage present for his daughter. He also made a partition amongst the warriors of the tribe, and put aside five hundred camels for the marriage feast, and besought his uncle to have the ceremony performed. His uncle then informed him what Oosak had done, how he had demanded his daughter, and how he had refused him. On hearing this the light became dark in the eyes of Hassan. If Oosak dares to molest me, said he, I will tear out his lips and crush him to pieces, and I will drive him out of our land, even against his will. I will repair to King Zoheir, and will relate the affair to him ; then will I come upon him with the warriors of the tribes of Abs and Adnan, who heed not even Chosroe Nuhirvan.

Thus Hassan calmed the mind of his uncle, and they made ready the marriage ceremony, and sacrificed the camels and the sheep, and poured out the wine ; and seven days they continued in mirth and jollity ; but on the eighth day, as they were adorning



the bride with jewels and robes, and were about to wed her to Hassan, intelligence reached them that Oosak had resolved to make all the women his slaves, plunder their property, and slay the men.

On hearing this, Hassan stood in front of his party, as they were consulting what was to be done. Hassan, said they, we are not able to contend with Oosak, for he has assembled all the tribe of Cahtan, and there come with him the tribe of Zerker, and the tribe of Anka; and he has sent to Masood, the son of Moosad the Kelbian, and with him also is Awef, whom you made prisoner, and whose hair you cut off; and we have not that confidence in ourselves to suppose that our means can resist such accumulated forces. Upon this Hassan went to his uncle. Uncle, said he, have patience with me for ten days, and I will show you what I will do with those haughty boasters.

So he took with him a hundred horsemen, and went his way till he reached the lake of Zatool Irsad, and on seeing King Zoheir, he told him what we have now related as the cause of his coming. Antar was present, and heard all that had happened to Hassan; and being much interested about him, he instantly arose, and kissing the King's hand—O my lord, he cried, let me be deputed by you for this service; let me go with Hassan, and I will destroy his enemy. Go, my son, cried Zoheir to Malik,—go to the assistance of your brother, and take with



you whomever you please of our warriors, and Antar among the rest, and return not till you have blotted out every vestige of Oosak.

The King then ordered the dinner to be prepared for Hassan and his companions, whilst Malik was employed in getting ready for the expedition, and chose from the tribe a thousand experienced warriors; and in three days Hassan and his associates all mounted their horses with Prince Malik, and Antar the impetuous horseman, and Shiboob as his attendant; and Hassan was the happiest of men in the assistance of the tribe of Abs. Thus they marched on, clad in steel, and their bright cuirasses sparkled on their bodies. And as they rode, said Malik to Antar—O Aboolfawaris, recite to us some of thy verses. Willingly, my Lord, he replied; and thus spoke:—

“ I lust after the blows of the cleaving scimitars,  
“ and I idolize the thrusts of the well made spears.  
“ I long for the cups of death, when they are pure,  
“ and they circle round the heads of the illustrious  
“ brave. It is the blow and the thrust when the  
“ horses stumble among the death-bearing lances,  
“ and the armies are in confusion, that please me  
“ under the shades of the dust, like the wings of  
“ darkness, as the coursers storm over the earth,  
“ the barbs of the lances plunge into obscurity, and  
“ start from it like the sparkling stars. Falchions  
“ gleam in it in every direction, like the flashes of



“ lightning in the darkness of night. O by thy life,  
“ honour and glory, and eminence, and the accom-  
“ plishment of hopes, and exaltation of fame are for  
“ him who rushes into the combat magnanimously,  
“ where alone in the height of glory are the highest  
“ honours. Let him thrust among the warriors and  
“ the chiefs with a heart unmoved in the fall of sword  
“ blows. Let him brandish furiously his sabre and  
“ spear in the boldness of his spirit, undaunted  
“ at calamities. Let him do justice to the lance of  
“ Cahtan in the contest, and let him stretch forth  
“ proudly his shoulders with the edge of the sci-  
“ mitar. Otherwise, let him lead a contemptible  
“ life in ignominy, and when he dies, his friends  
“ will not mourn over him. The beauteous virgins  
“ will not weep in anguish for any but the horsemen  
“ noble in the hour of trial. I am the hero well  
“ known in the field of battle, and I am the eager  
“ knight amongst my relations. I am the assaulting  
“ lion, and the hero who defends their dwellings  
“ and habitations.”

O Aboolfawaris, said Hassan, verily you surpass  
all the horsemen of the age in eloquence and courage,  
and generosity and nobleness of mind. You are in  
truth the jewel of the times. Antar thanked him,  
and they travelled on for three days, and on the  
fourth day (for the Lord of Heaven had decreed the  
glory of Antar, and that no one should exceed him  
in prosperity) Antar happening to stray a little out



of the way, descended into a deep valley : and lo ! there were two horsemen engaged in desperate combat. Antar urged on his steed, and coming up to them, Stop, ye Arabs, he cried, and tell me the cause of your quarrel. At the instant one of them stepped aside, and came up to Antar. Noble horseman of the desert and the town, said he, I refer myself to you, for you are able to protect me. I will take your part, said Antar, I will protect you, I pledge myself to you ; but acquaint me with your story, and what has rendered necessary this combat between you.

Know then, noblest knight of the age, said the youth, that I and this horseman are brothers, of the same father and the same mother ; he is the eldest, and I am the youngest ; and our father was one of the Arab chieftains, and he was called Amroo, the son of Harith, the son of Teba, and Teba was our ancestor ; and one day as he was sitting down, his flocks strayed away, and one of his camels was lost, and as he was very partial to it, he questioned some of the herdsmen about it. One of them said, Know, my lord, yesterday this camel strayed away from the pasture ; I followed behind it, and it still continued to run away, and I after it, till I became tired ; and perceiving that it lagged behind, I stretched out my hand and took up a stone, black in appearance, like a hard rock, brilliant and sparkling. I struck the camel with it, and it hit the



camel on the right side and issued out on the left, and the camel fell to the ground dead. On coming up to it I found the stone by its side, and the camel was weltering in its blood.

On hearing this, my ancestor mounted his horse, and taking the peasant with him, went to find out the pasture. They passed on till they came to the camel, which they found dead, and the stone lying near it. My ancestor took it in his hand, and considered it very attentively, and he knew it was a thunderbolt; so he carried it away, and returned home. He gave it to a blacksmith, and ordered him to make a sword of it. He obeyed, and took it and went his way; and in three days he returned to my ancestor with a sword two cubits long and two spans wide. My ancestor received it, and was greatly pleased when he saw it, and turned towards the blacksmith and said, What name have you given it? So the blacksmith repeated this distich: "The sword is sharp, O son of the tribe of Ghalib, "sharp indeed, but where is the striker for the "sword?" And my ancestor waved the sword with his hand, and said, As to the smiter, I am the smiter; and struck off the head of the blacksmith, and separated it from his body. He then cased it with gold, and called it Dhambi, on account of its sharpness. He laid it by amongst his treasures, and when he died it came in succession to my father, with the rest of the arms, and when my father perceived his death



was at hand, he called me to him privately. O my son, said he, I know your brother is of a tyrannical obstinate disposition, one that likes violence and hates justice, and I am aware that at my death he will usurp my property. What measures shall I take? said I. He answered, Take this sword and conceal it, and let no one know any thing about it; and when you see that he takes forcible possession of all my property, cattle and wealth, do you be content, my son, with this sword, and it will be of great benefit to you; for if you present it to Nushirvan, King of Persia, he will exalt you with his liberality and favours, and if you present it to the Emperor of Europe, he will enrich you with gold and silver.

When I heard these words, I consented to what he demanded, and took it out, in the darkness of the night, and having buried it in this place, I returned to my father, and stayed with him till he died. We buried him, and returned home; but my brother took possession of all my father had, and gave me nothing, not a rope's end; and when he searched for the arms, and saw not the Dhami, he asked me for it. I denied knowing any thing about it; he gave me the lie, and abused me most violently: at last I confessed, and told him I had buried it in such a spot; so he came with me hither, and searched for it, but could not find it. Again he asked me where I had buried it; and when he saw me roaming about



from place to place, he rushed upon me, and cried out, saying—Vile wretch! you know where the sword is, and act thus to deceive me. He attacked me, and sought to slay me. I defended myself until you arrived, and now I demand your protection.

When Antar heard this, his heart pitied him; he left the youth, and turning to his brother, said, Why do you tyrannize over your brother? and do not divide with him the property your father left? Base slave, cried he, highly incensed, look to yourself, and interfere not so arrogantly; and he turned upon Antar, thinking him a common man; but Antar gave him no time to wheel, or direct his reins, ere he pierced him through the chest with his spear, and thrust it ten spans through his back, and threw him down dead. And now, young man, said he to the other, return to your family, and assume the rank of your father, and should any one molest you, send and inform me; I will come and tear his life out of his sides. The youth thanked him, and expressed his gratitude. Now my brother is no more, said he, I have no other enemy: and he departed home. But Antar fixed his spear in the ground, and dismounted from Abjer, and sat down to rest himself; and as he was moving the sand with his fingers, he touched a stone: on removing what was about it, behold! the sword the youth had been seeking. He still cleared away, and drew it forth, and seized hold of it; and it was a sword two cubits



in length, and two spans wide, of the metal of Amalec, like a thunderbolt. And Antar was convinced of his good fortune, and that every thing began and ended in the most high God.

Antar mounted and pursued his comrades and Prince Malik, bearing the sword in his hand. He showed it to Malik, and told him all about the youth and his brother, and the sword; of his having buried it, and all that passed between them; and Malik was greatly astonished, saying, This is a gift sent you by the Lord of Heaven.

They marched forward, passing over the wilds and the deserts that day and night; and the next day at dawn, behold a great dust arose before them, and when dispersed, five hundred horsemen appeared, all clothed in steel. Go and learn for us, said Antar to Shiboob, what means this dust, and what news there is beneath it. Shiboob quitted them, and returned quick as a bird on the wing. Son of my mother, cried he, these are your enemies, the army of Gheidac. But the circumstance that occasioned the approach of this horseman was this: it happened that Oosak had demanded assistance of Gheidac, in his meditated attack on the tribe of Mazin.

Now there was blood revenge between Gheidac and Antar, because Antar had killed his father, and he had been brought up an orphan; but when he grew up he became a valiant horseman, and



destroyed his opponents; and he was a blazing thunderbolt, and overthrew knights and slew warriors. And when his name was spread abroad among the tribes, they gave him supreme command, and he sat in the place of his father. He became proud, and behaved haughtily to his people.

Now there was a man in the tribe called Codhàah, and he hated Gheidac. O Gheidac, said he one day, thou art a marked man; it does not become thee to behave so haughtily towards the horsemen, when thou hast not yet revenged the murder of thy father: how canst thou presume to boast over the brave and the valiant? And Gheidac said, Who is the stout king on whom I am to be avenged? Thy revenge is on Antar, son of Shedad, said he. Then the light became darkness in his eyes, and he cried out to the horsemen of his tribe, and he ordered them to prepare for an expedition to attack the tribe of Abs, and he swore he would slay Antar, and make him drink the cup of perdition, and destroy the whole tribe of Abs and Adnan. The tribe assented to his directions, and took with them all their warlike instruments for the expedition.

Just at that time arrived Oosak's messenger to request Gheidac's assistance against the tribe of Mazin. So Gheidac gave up his former intention, and went with the messenger of Oosak to perform what he required of him, and he was marching on this object when he met Antar and the Absians, and



Antar despatched Shiboob, as we before stated. This day, said Antar, I will unite Gheidac to his father; I will curse his family and his relations. As soon as Gheidac saw the tribe of Abs, and Antar the destroyer of horsemen, his heart was overjoyed, and he cried out to his party—This is a glorious morning; to-day will I take my revenge, and wipe out my disgrace. So he assailed the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and his people attacked in his rear like a cloud when it pours forth water and rains. And the Knight of Abs, Antar, assaulted them likewise, anxious to try his sword, the famous Dhami. They all rushed forward, and horsemen encountered horsemen. Cowards fled, and the weak-hearted were disgraced; but the bold were firm in the assault, and the equals in courage met each other in the field. The earth trembled under trampling of the horses,—the heavens were obscured with the clouds of dust,—the warriors were covered with wounds, and the swords laboured in the cause of death; exertion was alive, and all jest was at an end. Thus they continued fighting till mid-day; and the impetuosity of Antar was the impetuosity of a resolute hero. When Gheidac observed the deeds of Antar, the bold warrior, he roared like a lion in his den, and he rushed down upon the lion Antar, who met him, his heart undaunted in the midst of terrors, and occupied him in the contest, and continually drew him on, as a lion draws on



weaker animals, until having wearied him, he shouted at him and struck him with horror; then assailed him so that stirrup grated stirrup; and he struck him on the head with Dhami. He cleft his vizor and wadding, and his sword played away between the eyes, passing through his shoulders down to the back of the horse, even to the ground: and he and his horse made four pieces; and to the strictest observer, it would appear that he had divided them with scales.

Gheidac's companions beheld their chief, and that he was dead; and they said one to another—Never did we see such a blow; were not this slave endued with the whole power of courage, he could not at one blow have thus destroyed our chief. So they took to flight and ran away, exclaiming—May God curse thy harlot mother! how fierce is thy blow! how piercing is thy thrust!

Antar and the horsemen soon returned from the pursuit, having filled the earth with the dead, and having collected the scattered horses, and all the booty and plunder from the plains and deserts; as they prosecuted their journey towards the tribe of Mazin, Antar preceded the troops of warriors like a noble lion, and thus addressed them:

“I am he that makes the warriors drink of the  
“cups of death with the sharp-bladed glittering  
“Indian scimitar. I am the raiser of their dust,  
“and the atmosphere is thick and darkly turbid



“ with blows at which cowards are humbled and  
“ terrified. I am the death that never rushes into  
“ the fiery day of battle without a tongue to speak.  
“ I have slain Gheidac, because he was oppressive  
“ and insulted me, and soon will I send Oosak after  
“ him. I charge right and left through their horse-  
“ men, and dash through the midst of them. I  
“ cut down to the ground the warriors in the fight,  
“ whilst the horses stumble and slip over their  
“ heads. O Ibla, though they abuse me for my  
“ blackness, yet the fairness of my exploits shines  
“ and flashes. O Ibla, the men of my tribe have  
“ witnessed my spear-thrust and sword-blow raging  
“ among the skulls. I destroy the heroes of war  
“ with my scimitar, and whole armies are extir-  
“ pated at the edge of my sword. How many  
“ horsemen throw away their arms in terror of me,  
“ when they behold me robed in black gore. My  
“ ambition is raised above the Pleiades, and the  
“ fortune of my star is suspended from heaven.”

They marched forward without delay, until they reached the tribe of Mazin, where they perceived the glittering of spears, the glare of armour, the flash of swords, and warriors engaged round the tents, whilst the women were earnestly encouraging them to the contest and battle. Who is it that fights with children and women? and who is it that shrinks from his enemy and foes? cried the heroes. When Antar saw and heard the cries of the women,



and the screams of the children from the crowd (for he was particularly solicitous in the cause of women), the light was darkened in his eyes, and he knew not the right from the left. Do you take your warriors towards the quarter of the women, cried he to Malik, and I will attack these horsemen who have taken their property, and have dispersed them in the plains and wilds. And he shouted forth in his well known voice when incensed—Ignoble dastards, he roared, I am Antar, the son of Shedad ! He attacked, and at his assault the mountains tottered. He rushed down upon the enemy, and at once overpowered the warriors and destroyed the heroes, driving away the enemy out of their tents ; and at his second attack all the scene of action was expanded ; he shouted in front of the horses, and forced them back upon their haunches ; and when the horsemen crowded about him, he snatched hold of one from the back of his horse, and grasping him by his feet, and whirling him round as a sling, with him he struck down a second, and the two instantly fell dead. Thus the battle was raging among them, when Antar heard the voice of Prince Malik, crying out, Son of Shedad, haste to my assistance !

Now the Prince was engaged with the party of Moosad, the lord of the waters of Araeer ; he had dispersed them, and was about to repeat his attack, when Moosad came upon him roaring like a lion. He was an experienced horseman : he attacked Prince



Malik, and pressed him hard; and when Malik saw that his life was in danger, he cried for Antar's aid; who no sooner heard him than he turned Abjer round, and like a ferocious lion rushed down upon Moosad, who was about to gallop round and charge at him; but Antar gave him no time. Come on! he cried: and he terrified him, and struck him with Dhami on the chest, and he divided him down to the girdle of his back, and hurled him down, hewn in two. He then assailed the army of Oosak, his heart undaunted at death.

And when the tribe of Mazin saw Antar's prowess, the hearts of the heroes were encouraged, and they hastened to the combat; men met men, and heroes heroes; blood flowed and streamed, scimitars glittered, and spears goaded; armour was riven; lives were plundered; the ground was discoloured with blood; the warriors were covered with glory; the flames of war greatly raged; innumerable were the blows and the thrusts, and the easy became difficult: the battle field boiled like the boiling of caldrons; mighty was every act, and fate descended amongst them. The eagles and vultures hovered round; cowards were overthrown, and the brave were overwhelmed: heroes were slain on both sides. The horror of the scene was tremendous, the universal cry among them was Death! Hands and arms were torn asunder. Antar cut through the troops, and made heads fly



off like balls, and hands like leaves of trees. The van cried out to the rear; they roared against Antar from afar; but no one dared to approach the spot where he fought.

Antar eagerly sought after the plume that floated above the head of Oosak, and he stopped not in his attack until he was beneath the standard where Oosak was waiting for his people to bring him his beloved Naeema: neither could he be roused till Antar came before him and encountered him. Then ensued a dreadful engagement. The combat lasted an hour; when nerveless sunk the arm of Oosak. Antar, seeing the state he was in, clung to him and grappled him; and drawing his sword from his scabbard, he aimed a blow at his head, but Oosak received it on his shield. The sword of Antar came down upon it and shivered it in two, and split his vizor in twain, and it penetrated even to his thighs, down to the back of the horse; and the rider and the horse fell in four parts; and he cried out—O by Abs! I am the lover of Ibla; never will I be controlled! I will not be restrained!

When the troops of Oosak saw this deed, they were bewildered; they became confounded; and they said to one another, This is no human being,—every one that comes before him drinks of the cup of death. So they wheeled about their horses and retreated into the rocky deserts, whilst Antar and the tribe of Abs and Mazin pursued them, and



having driven them away out of that land, they returned to the scattered cattle and dispersed horses; and as they all came back to the tents, the tribe of Mazin dismounted, and met Antar, and marched by the side of his stirrup, celebrating his victory and triumph till they reached their camp, where the women and the men came out, and the tribe of Abs were invited to the best spots. Hassan was the happiest of them all with Antar and the Absians. He prepared feasts and festivals and entertainments, which lasted for seven days; and on the eighth night Naeema was married to Hassan.

Early the next morning all the Arabs went to their respective countries and homes, and the tribe of Abs also departed; but all the tribe of Mazin, in order to take leave of them, accompanied them a whole day's journey, when Antar besought them to return home, and he and Malik pursued their journey towards their own country, over wilds and plains. And when they were nigh, Prince Malik sent on a messenger to announce their approach. All the tribe of Abs were extremely anxious about that expedition, particularly King Zoheir, with respect to Antar; because his enemies, and those that envied him, exceeded his friends and well-wishers.

Now Rebia the son of Zeead had a brother, whose name was Amarah: he was one of the nobles, but a great coxcomb, was very particular in his



dress, fond of perfumes, and always keeping company with the women and young girls. About that period, happening to hear much said about Ibla, and what Antar had reported of her, and repeated of her in his verses, a passion was kindled in his heart, and from hearsay he conceived a violent love for her; and as poets term it, his ears fell in love before his eyes. Amarah sent for one of his female slaves, and said to her, Go to the habitations of the tribe of Carad, and obtain some account of Ibla for me, and learn if what Antar says of her be true, or disbelieved amongst the people; for if she has all the beauty and charms that are attributed to her, I shall demand her in marriage, and will be lawfully wedded to her. She promised to obey him, and departed. She came to the habitations of the tribe of Carad, and presented herself to Ibla, pretending to come on a visit; so Ibla gave her a kind reception. Thus the slave girl ascertained the point about Ibla, and found her a perfect miracle of beauty and loveliness. She remained about an hour, and returned to Amarah. Blessed be God, how great is his power, and how fair are his works! cried she, as she entered the tents, and in Amarah's hearing; and he asked her what had occasioned her so much astonishment. O, said she, it is that damsel, whose equal exists not; for the most high God has granted to her such beauty,



and such charms, as he has never yet bestowed on any one of the daughters of the greatest Kings.

At this his heart fluttered, he was agitated, he instantly arose, and put on his best clothes, and perfumed himself all over, and let his hair float down his shoulders, and mounted a white-faced horse, and set out for the habitations of the tribe of Carad. He happened to meet Malik, Ibla's father, and his son Amroo, on the road. Amarah saluted them, and said to Malik—Come along with me, my uncle, for I have something particular to say to you. If you have any business with me, replied Malik, you might have sent a servant to me, and I would have visited you. What I want of you, said Amarah, must be done personally between us. I wish to be nearly related to you, and am most anxious to be connected with you. I am a suitor with you, and am desirous of wedding your daughter; and I have only done this out of my anxiety for her on account of her shepherd, who has disgraced her among the Arabs of the desert.

Thus Amarah continued his talk, till Malik's eyes wept tears of joy: his bosom was elated and transported with delight. O chief, said he, my daughter is your slave, and I and my son Amroo are the most obedient of your servants—and he stretched out his hand to Amarah, and promised his daughter



to him; and when they returned home, Amarah told his brother Rebia what had passed between him and Malik, son of Carad. I shall not permit thee thus to connect thyself, said Rebia; have nothing to do with such fellows; for if Antar hears it, he will not leave a single man alive of all the tribe of Zeead. And pray who's Antar? asked Amarah—have I not a thousand slaves like him? and if the foul wretch presume to interfere with me, I will show him the valour of Amarah the munificent; I'll show him what I'll do with him. If you can effect the marriage to-morrow morning early, said Rebia, give her father the dower and marriage presents without delay, and introduce yourself to her in the absence of Antar; for he is an uncontrollable horseman, and a man rough and harsh in his manners; but if you can gain her whilst he's away, there will be an end of it. Amarah assented to the proposal of Rebia, and thought his advice prudent; for he feared Antar would kill him, and make him drink of the cup of death and dissolution.

So the next day Amarah mounted his horse and went to Malik to give him the dower and marriage presents; and just at that moment arrived a messenger at the tents of the tribe of Abs, announcing the approach of Prince Malik, son of Zoheir, and Antar, son of Shedad, and all the noble warriors with them. Every one mounted his horse to go and meet them; and friends saluted friends.



Antar went home, and entered his aunt's apartments, and staid till morning with his mother, whom he questioned about Ibla, inquiring whether she had talked of him during his absence? God be with thee, my son, said his mother, say no more about Ibla, and that lovely form—if thou art asleep, awake! Antar upon this instantly jumped up—What king or prince, exclaimed he, has taken her away? The Chief Amarah, said his mother, has taken her. Every thing is completed but the giving of the dower and marriage presents. By the faith of a noble and faithful Arab, cried Antar, to-morrow will I slay that Amarah, were he even concealed within the chambers of Nushirvan, King of Persia; to-morrow will I tell the whole affair to my friend Prince Malik, and ask his counsel.

He remained at home that night, but early in the morning he repaired to the habitations of the Prince: he entered his tent, and kissed his hand. Malik received him kindly, seated him by his side, saying—How hast thou passed the night, Aboolfawaris? My night was the night of thy most accursed foe, replied Antar. What means this? said Malik; inform me what's the matter, and be sure of thy success and triumph. Antar told him what Malik had done, and how he had betrothed his daughter to Amarah; But, my lord, I must indeed slay that Amarah, and the whole



race of Zeead, and I will depart from this land and country. But why quit this land? said Malik, greatly disturbed; I am a foe to those who are thy foes, and a friend to those who are thy friends: have patience until we go out to the chase, and then will I speak to thy father Shedad, and will urge him to acknowledge thee as his son, and that thou art a part of his heart. Then take Ibla from her father; and if he does not assent, I will put my name \* on her, and will keep off any suitor or wooer till the ceremony be performed, and thou art in possession of thy wife.

At this, Antar's grief and anguish were appeased. So they mounted their horses and sought the habitation of King Zoheir, whence they all went out on a hunting party. And Amarah rode by the side of Ibla's father: he was dressed out in his finest raiments, and his limbs were perfumed and scented, and his hair flowed down his shoulders. Go, Aboolfawaris, to my tent, said Malik to Antar, that I may speak with thy father Shedad. Antar departed, and Prince Malik, riding up to Shedad, said—How long will you reject your son Antar? does not your heart lean towards him? and do you not yearn after him? all the horde envies you on his account. Grant me this request, Shedad, and let me make a noble entertainment, and let me raise his head above a state of servitude, and you will see

\* i. e. He would take her under his peculiar protection.



what he will do in return for such a favour. Who, answered Shedad, whilst his wrath was evident in his features, who is the Arab that ever did such a deed before me? Do you wish that it should be said of me that Shedad was captivated with a Negro woman, even to desire to marry her, and she bore him a son, and he acknowledged him as such because he became a great warrior, and a destroying hero? And who is he, said Malik, that having a son resembling your son Antar would deny him, even were swords to cut his body in pieces?—According to my opinion, you should glory in him. Let the Arabs follow your example.—Good practices are to be admired, even though they be new. My lord, we'll consult about this, said Shedad; and he went his way home. Prince Malik also, returning unsuccessful, found Antar in the greatest anxiety—he inquired what had passed with his father—Malik told him.

Antar remained that night with Prince Malik, but early next morning he mounted his horse and went towards his mother's tent, and as he was passing along the road, he met Amarah in the quarter of the tribe of Carad. He had been that night consulting with Malik, Ibla's father, about the marriage, and in the morning he was returning home, followed by his attendants. He was riding in a most affected, coxcombical manner; and as soon as he saw Antar he trembled, and was in great dismay;



however, he plucked up courage, and let his tongue run glibly on. Son of Shedad, said he, where wert thou last night? thy masters were seeking thee; for I was there with them, and having heard of thy talent for eloquence, it was my intention to give thee a robe suitable to such as thou art.

On hearing this, the light became dark in Antar's eyes: he came up to him—Amarah, he exclaimed, I am not worthy of receiving a robe or present from thee; but when thou enterest unto my mistress Ibla, the daughter of Malik, verily, vile wretch, I will wrench thy neck off thy shoulders; I will curse thy family and thy parents, and I will make thine the most fatal of marriages; and Antar ran close up to Amarah, and seized him by the waist, heaved him up in his hand till he had raised him above his head, and then dashed him on the ground, and almost smashed his bones. Amarah fainted with fright, and gave most ludicrous signs of cowardice and alarm.

Immediately there arose an uproar among the tribes of Abs and Zeead, and soon appeared Prince Malik at full speed; for as soon as he heard the news, he was afraid some mischief would befall his friend. He came up with his drawn sword and joined Antar, who stood firm, with his trusty Dhami in his hand. By the faith of an Arab of Medher, said Malik, verily Antar, in the tribe of Carad, is



like a rare onyx amongst people who know not its value or worth. Come on, Aboolfawaris, he continued, now for the family of Zeead ! and he plied his sword among them. Were the tribe of Zeead in any other place, cried Antar, hastening towards him, and kissing his hand, I would show thee what I would do with them in battle and war ; but I am afraid of blame and reproaches ; and lest the noble Arabs should say, that a slave of the tribe of Carad put his cousins to the sword. Malik was amazed at Antar, and his magnanimity ; and just then Rebia came up at full speed with the intention of killing Antar the lion-hearted hero, for he too had heard of the event : so he mounted his horse, and was greatly alarmed lest his brother should be killed and buried ; for he had previously told his brother that he did not wish him to interfere with Ibla, or expose himself and his family to danger with the slave Antar. He rushed upon Antar, eager to destroy him. Stop, Rebia, cried Malik, or by the faith of an Arab I will not spare one of your people or warriors. Matters were in this state, when lo ! King Zoheir arrived, with all his heroes of the tribe of Abs and Adnan. The attendants cried out, Hold ! stop ! fight not ! ye have put in motion King Zoheir, the ruler of the age.

Now on that day King Zoheir had received intelligence that the tribe of Tey were coming down



upon him on account of Amima, the daughter of the Blood-drinker, and with them were twelve thousand horsemen. King Zoheir was therefore troubled in his heart, and he kept it secret, for he feared that death and ruin were coming upon the tribe of Abs. At that moment also reached him the account of Amarah and Antar; and he was greatly alarmed that dissensions should arise amongst the tribes: so he mounted his horse and came to them. As soon as King Zoheir arrived, they held back from the fray, and they presented themselves, both Amarah and his brother, whilst all the people cried out unanimously—O great King, there is no security for us in your country, unless you permit us to slay this diabolical black slave, Antar; for he rebels and revolts, and no one but you can restrain him. O my cousins, said Zoheir, tell me what is the matter, what has Antar done?

Rebia came forward and told him that Amarah had demanded in marriage Ibla, the daughter of Malik, and what Antar had done to him. So the King knew that Antar had been ill-used, and that what they had told him about the marriage of Ibla was only to deceive him: but observing how many complained of Antar, he said, Tell me what is your intention, or what shall I do to him. O King, said they, either kill him, or banish him from our country, or send him back to tend the sheep and the camels. As to killing him, replied the King, I cannot



submit to you, because he has eaten of our meat, and our protection is on him; and as to banishing him or sending him back to tend the camels and the sheep, that does not depend upon me—it is Shedad's affair.

So the King sent for Shedad; and when he came—These people are much exasperated against your son, said Zoheir, but you have the entire disposal of him, therefore do with him what you please, and I will be witness for you. I am quite bewildered and distressed about this business, replied Shedad, but my opinion is that he should return to the care of the sheep and the camels, and repent of his conduct. Call Antar here, cried Zoheir, and make the compact with him in my presence. Shedad called for Antar, and he came. Thou wicked slave, said his master, it is my determination that thou return to the care of the sheep and the camels, for I will not irritate the whole tribe, and submit to thee. I will not molest my brother Malik, and obey thee.

When Antar heard his father's orders, the tears rushed from his eyes, and he regretted greatly what had passed. Do, said Antar, what you please, for I am one of your servants, and a slave has only to obey his master, though he torment and afflict him every day of his life: and from this day will I never mount a horse, and will never be present in battle, nor go anywhere but by your permission. And



King Zoheir and others witnessed for Antar, and for his promise; and the flame that had blazed was extinguished; and they all returned to their tents; and his enemies, and those that envied him, exulted over Antar, particularly the family of Zeead.

And now, my cousins, cried Zoheir, prepare your warlike instruments this instant, to fight the tribe of Tey, for they are coming down upon us with twelve thousand horsemen, on account of Anima the daughter of the Blood-drinker, in order to release her from slavery and indignity. They all assented, and separated to prepare for the conflict. But Antar was rejoiced and glad at hearing this intelligence, for he knew the tribe of Abs would be beaten and routed, and that they would be in want of him. So he went home and entered his mother's apartment, and asked about Ibla. Ibla was with me just now, said she; and she said, Sooth the heart of my cousin Antar, and tell him from me that if my father even makes my grave my resting-place, none but him do I desire, none but him will I choose.

Antar's heart gladdened as he heard the words of Ibla. He staid at home that night, and the next day he took his brothers Jereer and Shiboob, and went to the pasture, driving the cattle and the camels before him.

And King Zoheir mounted his horse with all his warriors of the tribe of Abs, in number four



thousand, all armed and accoutred, and set out to meet the tribe of Tey, leaving in the tents, for the protection of the property, three hundred horsemen, with the sons of Shas and Cais, and Rebia the son of Zeead. He traversed the deserts : and the tribe of Abs remained in safety one night ; the next day Antar conducted the cattle and camels to the pasture, and Shiboob and Jereer went out also with the cattle and the sheep, seeking the pastures. No sooner had they quitted the tents, but a dust arose that darkened the whole country. It was a party of the tribe of Tey, who had passed King Zoheir on the road, and reached the land of Shoorebah like a blazing flame.

What is your counsel now, O Ebereah? said Antar to Shiboob. If you listen to my advice, said his brother, to-day you will obtain all you wish and desire, and you will become the noblest of the tribe of Abs, and be admitted to the rank and consideration of an Arab, and be reckoned one of the horsemen of Arabia. My opinion is, you should take the camels and the cattle, and ascend this eminence towards Mount Saadi : I will bring you your horse and your armour : for I know that the tribe of Abs will be routed, and will stand in need of you ; and they will come to you, and will intreat you : but do not mount your horse, do not take part in the contest till your father admits you to his own rank, and acknowledges you as a son, and as a part of his heart, and



your uncle gives you his daughter in marriage, and makes you a partner in his wealth—then descend and destroy your enemies and those that envy you ; and thus, my brother, you will attain the object of your wishes.

Antar heard this advice of Shiboob ; and he drove away the cattle and the camels, and ascended the hill of Mount Saadi ; while Shiboob went and brought him his horse and his armour, and they all three sat down to watch the result of the contest between the tribes of Abs and Tey : but the Teyans attacked the pastures of the Absians, and carried off their camels and their cattle, with their shepherds ; and the whole country and vicinity were filled with them. Many of the herdsmen returned in flight, and spread alarm among the tents, informing the Absians of the arrival of the Teyans, and of their attack upon them, and that their army was like the tempestuous sea. They were amazed, and put to confusion ; for they knew that King Zoheir must have missed them on the road.

Shas called out to the warriors, and assembled the men. Come on, my cousins, cried he, behold the enemy ; let us fight for our women and our tents, and let us infuse fear and terror into their hearts, or they will cut in among ye, and nothing will secure us against the cup of death, but the blows with the sword. They all mounted, the men were encouraged, and rushed on to the combat ; man opposed man, and



hero encountered heroes ; blood flowed and streamed, limbs were hewn off, and horrors were spread among them for an hour ; when at length the noble Absians were so hard pressed, that the Teyans overwhelmed them, for there were twelve thousand of these, and the Absians only three hundred. Shas and Rebia and Amarah were wounded and nearly dead. The Absians abandoned their property and families, and sought the wilds and the deserts, and the enemy took possession of their country and lands.

Alas ! said Ibla's father to Shedad, O my brother, where is thy son ? Let him come to us in such a dreadful day as this, and liberate us from death and misery. We cannot raise our heads towards Antar, said Shedad ; but were he present, our condition would indeed be the reverse of this. Shedad raised his eyes towards the hill, and he saw Shiboob and Jereer and Antar seated on the ground, and contemplating the tribe of Abs, and their defeat. So he ran towards them, and his brother Malik followed him—Canst thou, in an hour like this, said Shedad, employ thyself in tending the cattle and the camels ? Behold ! the enemy have succeeded in their attempts, and have plundered our property and slain our horsemen, and have threatened to capture our women and our families.

What dost thou wish me to do ? said Antar ; I am indeed grieved at thy distress. O that I could rescue thee from destruction and defeat ; but I am



a slave, and am not capable of doing any thing, and am not worthy your consideration; I am indeed a poor slave, and one who conducts cattle and camels to the pastures, and one employed in milking, and picking up wood, and tending cattle and sheep—am I not for this contemptible and despised? And he quitted his father and his uncle Malik where they stood, and went away from them.

Shedad was vexed at his conduct. What means this indifference about us? said he. What do you want of me? said Antar—Hast ever heard of any one asking protection and countenance from a slave, and abandoning noble princes? Mount, descend, and destroy the enemy, Antar! cried Shedad, and I will grant thee all thy wishes and hopes, and I will raise thee to the rank and honour of an Arab. But what will be this rank and honour? said Antar. I will, said Shedad, recognize thee as my son, and as a part of my heart. O my nephew, descend and drive away the enemy from us! exclaimed Malik, and I will acknowledge thee of our family.

Whilst all this was going on between Antar, Shedad, and Malik, the Teyans attacked the tents, and plundered the property and goods, and captured the women and families, even the females of King Zoheir's family; and his daughter Mootejeredah and his wife Temadhur were both taken prisoners; and they seized Ibla, and Shereeah and Semeeah; and dreadful was the wailing of Ibla when they threw down their dwellings to the very founda-



tions, and they left nothing worth a halter; for they were Arabs, and greedy of plunder, and only conquered for spoil; and there were men among them who loaded their horses, and loaded themselves with a good horse-load besides; and in a short time they made the whole country a barren waste, driving away with them the females and the families, as they departed over the hills and the deserts.

Malik, Ibla's father, looked towards the women, and seeing Ibla a captive among the warriors, O my nephew, cried he to Antar, dost thou not see thy beloved Ibla, and wilt thou not defend and protect her? If I mount this instant, Malik, said Antar, and destroy this party, and release Ibla from her affliction, wilt thou give her to me in marriage? Yes, said Malik, by the God that created her and beautified her. And he extended his hand towards Antar, and swore by the God of mankind, and said, If thou dost liberate Ibla, she shall be thy wife for ever: and Shedad admitted his pretensions to honour and rank, and swore he would not deny him again, were the foe to tear his body to pieces.

Shedad and Malik having finished speaking, and Antar having made them confirm their oaths, Shiboob brought him his horse Abjer. Now mount, my brother, said he, for thou hast no more to say to thy father and thy uncle—Put to the rout these hateful foes. Antar clad himself in armour, and



encased himself in arms till he was like a tower, or a mass rent from the mountain's side. He rushed impetuously down from the height, his heart harder than stone, and his soul more buoyant than the waves of the sea when it roars. He shouted with a voice so loud that the whole country and valleys trembled at the shock—Ye ignoble dastards, I am Antar the son of Shedad! and he thus spoke:

“ Soon shall ye behold my deeds this day with  
“ the foe in the field of spear-thrusts, and the battle  
“ fire; and my furious courage amongst the tribes;  
“ so that in my sublimity I will mount above the  
“ Pisces. I plunge into the flames of war with the  
“ cleaving scimitar, and I extirpate them with the  
“ goring lance. I drive back the horses on their  
“ haunches from the lofty seat of my thin-flanked  
“ Abjer, and with the blade of my sword Dhami,  
“ at whose edge flow the waves of death over the  
“ enemy. This day will I exhibit my ardent soul  
“ with my Indian sword, and I will meet the chests  
“ of the horse with my thrusts. I will establish the  
“ market of war in its field on the top of my steed,  
“ in the protection of my country. My sword is  
“ my father, and the spear in my hand is my father's  
“ brother; and I am the son of my day in the  
“ heights of the deserts.”

He bent his head over the saddle-bow, and made his attack. First he sought the horseman who had captured Ibla; he was in the rear, and his assault



was the assault of fate and destiny. He wished to pierce him through the chest, but he feared the point might touch Ibla, and she be slain with him: so he wheeled his horse on one side, and came upon his right like a ferocious lion, and shouted out in a voice like thunder when it bellows, and pierced with his spear his right side; the point issued out on his left, and he hurled him down dead, weltering in his blood. Ibla was terrified at the thrust of the spear, but she was unhurt. Antar dismounted, and came to Ibla. Fear not, thou light of mine eyes, said he, thou shalt behold thy Antar perform to-day deeds that shall be narrated and recorded.

Again he rushed upon the enemy like an outrageous lion; and Shiboob attended him shooting his arrows, with which he transfixed the hearts of the warriors. At the first attack he dispersed the troops from the tents, and in the second he laid bare the whole plain. He poured down upon them and he destroyed them, and overwhelmed them with shouts, and horror and death. He hewed off their arms and their limbs, and put to flight both the right and the left. And God prospered him in all he did, so that he slew all he aimed at, and overthrew all he touched. How numerous were the heroes he terrified! and at his shouts all the land trembled.

Now the tribe of Abs distinguished his voice through the confusion and thick dust, and they said



to one another, He has indeed routed them. They returned from the mountains and ravines, and joined the battle, and their hearts gained courage at the sight of Antar, the lord of war. But when Shas saw how Antar moved amongst the enemy, and how he overwhelmed them in slaughter and destruction, his gall burst, and his hatred increased. He turned towards his brother Cais, and said—Dost not behold the deeds of that foul Black, how he cuts down the enemy with his sword? Verily, he has discomfited them, and dispersed them among the wilds and the plains, and his greatness will raise him above us all. But I wish, my brother, to take him unawares and kill him whilst he is engaged in the conflict, and make him drink of the cup of perdition, that we may be relieved from his foul influence; and it will be said that the Teyans have slain him.

What mean'st thou, O Shas! replied Cais; does Antar deserve this of us, after having defended our wives and our families? How can we be guilty of such an act? Had it not been for Antar's sword, the enemy would not have left one of us alive—not one to tell the tale. My advice is that we should aid him in the conflict, and drive away from us these warriors, or we shall become a common proverb. Cais continued to make such representations to Shas, that at length he dissuaded him from his project. The whole tribe of Abs then collected together, and made one united effort against the enemy; and men encountered men, and heroes heroes, blood



flowed, limbs were hewn off, and the Absians exerted all their powers to join the lion warrior; but it was impossible at that time, for Antar had plunged into the midst of the Teyans, on account of their horseman, whose name was Rebeeah, who was the leader of the troops. He was eminent for his bravery, and it was he who had wounded Shas, and had destroyed many Absians, and had dispersed them among the mountain sides. And Antar continued slaughtering, and searching him until he overtook him, and did not give him time to turn or move his bridle ere he struck him with Dhami upon his breast, dividing him down to the thong that encircled his back, and he tumbled over, cut in twain.

When the Blood-drinker saw Antar smite the warrior, he was terrified and confounded, and said to his troops about him, This is no mortal man; all that have dared him have drank of the cup of perdition. And as soon as he had released his daughter, he placed her behind him, and sought the wilds and the deserts, followed by the tribe of Tey and all the troops that had survived. And they fled to the mountains and the rocks, their standards reversed. But the tribe of Abs pursued and drove them before them full three parasangs from their country, and then returned for the dispersed horses and the scattered property. And they went back to their own tents, Antar at their head, like the flower of the Judas tree, thus exclaiming:



“ I have abused fortune, but how can she humi-  
“ liate such as me ! I, too, that have a spirit would  
“ cut down mountains. I am the warrior of whom  
“ it is said, he tended the he and she camels of his  
“ tribe. When I assaulted Kendeh and Tey, their  
“ hands brandishing the long spears, with armies,  
“ that when I thought of them I imagined the  
“ whole earth filled with men ; and as their hardy  
“ steeds trampled our lands, whilst you might  
“ see them talking and exulting, ’twas then their  
“ steeds fled away horrified at me, and the redoubled  
“ thrusts that gored them as they sought the fight.  
“ The noble hero feels no fatigue ; him no chal-  
“ lenger need call to the combat. It was the slave  
“ alone that drove back the horsemen whilst the  
“ flame of battle was blazing,—then speeded away  
“ their troops in terror of his arm,—light they  
“ fled, burthened though they had been. Crushing  
“ were the stamps and tramlings on their necks,  
“ and the horse-shoes dashed and pounded their  
“ skulls. How many warriors were laid low by my  
“ sword, whilst they tore, in very rage, their hands  
“ with their teeth. I rescued the maidens and  
“ virgins, and not one did I leave but bereft of  
“ sense. Mine is a spirit for every enterprise, high  
“ is my fame, exalted is my glory.”

These verses excited surprise and admiration among the chiefs, and they thanked him. But Malik, Ibla’s father, and Shas and Rebia, and the tribe of Zeead, cherished a flame in their hearts ;



they thanked him in appearance, but in their soul their gall was burst. When they approached the tents, the women came out to meet them, beating the cymbals, and the slaves brandishing their swords; and Ibla stood in front of them like a full moon when it shines, as she cried out—May I never lose thee, O thou defender of women, and destroyer of every foe and enemy! At these words, Antar's grief and anguish vanished, and he thought that in her presence he could slay a host of enemies. The warriors then went down to their tents, and no one but talked of Antar, how he slew, and fought with the invaders; and they passed a night of joy, glorying in the deeds of Antar, the invincible hero.

The next day arrived in haste King Zoheir with his companions, for he had heard that his foe had passed him on the road: he feared his family might be destroyed and cut off; and he could scarcely believe he should find his family safe from the treacheries of the times; and as he approached the tents he saw dead bodies scattered about, broken scimitars and shattered spears, and his heart misgave him. But when he reached the tents, the chiefs came out to meet him: they saluted him, and related what Antar had done. And when King Zoheir heard this of the great Antar, he said to his surrounding heroes—Verily by the faith of an Arab, we are glorified in Antar above all that inhabit the wilds. And Antar came out



to meet him; the King approached him, and kissed him between the eyes—O Aboolfawaris, said he, we are unable to reward thee for this act, even were we to give thee all we possess in dominions and property.

Then the warriors went to their tents, and the King to his own pavilion. And his wife, Temadhur, came up to him, and kissing his hands—O King, said she, if you are wise and good, be kind to Antar; for it is he that has protected your wife and children. Thus was his joy in the deeds of Antar augmented, and he slept at ease until the morning dawned, when he ordered the sheep and camels to be slain, and a feast to be prepared, and a magnificent entertainment to be made ready for all the tribe of Abs and Adnan. The most highly honoured were Antar and the horsemen of the tribe of Carad. After dinner they began conversing, and Shedad related to the King all his son Antar had done: how he himself having acknowledged his relationship and connexion, and his brother Malik having promised him to Ibla, he mounted his horse and routed the enemy, and dispersed them amongst the wilds and the deserts.

This struck to the heart of Shas, and his soul was filled with indignation and rage, and his whole frame was ready to burst. Shedad, said he, how could you take upon yourself to introduce Antar, the son of a slave, to our tribe, and admit him to our rank and our consequence? Now we shall



become a shame amongst the Arabs to the end of time, and they will say the tribe of Abs has associated itself with black slaves.

O Shas, said Cais, give up this envious disposition, in which no one partakes with you. And King Zoheir turned also towards his son Shas, and rebuked him. O my lord, exclaimed Antar, standing up, the heart of Prince Shas is not inclined towards me; I will therefore retire from you to another tribe. Tears flowed from the eyes of Antar, and King Zoheir and the tribe of Carad gazed at him in astonishment; when at length the King arose, and having kissed Antar between the eyes, he thanked and praised him. Then turning towards the warriors of Abs, he cried out—O ye tribes of Abs and Adnan, and all ye that are here assembled, ye all know the purity of my connexion and rank, and my father and my mother; yet let Antar be called as I am called, for he is, by the faith of an Arab, my cousin, the antidote to all my sorrow and my grief, and he who honours him, honours me; and he who despises him, despises me,—and he cried out—Welcome, welcome to my cousin, thou reliever of sorrow!

Among the first who succeeded Zoheir was Prince Malik; he sprang towards Antar, and embraced him and kissed him between the eyes; and he likewise cried out—Welcome, welcome to my cousin, the reliever of sorrow! When the horsemen saw what King Zoheir and his son had



done, they could not avoid following the example ; so they sprang towards Antar and embraced him, and kissed him between the eyes, and admitted him to the honour and rank of an Arab, and all cried out—Welcome, welcome to my cousin ! But Shas was violently enraged ; he was nearly bursting with passion ; he arose hastily, and went to his tent. But the warriors sat down and began talking and jesting, anxiety and sorrow left them, and they were all joy and merriment ; they eat meat and drank wine till night brought on the darkness ; and at the termination of the feast the King clothed Antar in a robe worked with red gold, and girded on a trusty sword, and gave him a pike of Khata \*, and mounted him on an Arab horse, and called him the Champion of the tribes of Abs and Adnan. And Antar returned with his father and his uncles towards the tents, and his glory and honour were exalted among all the horsemen ; the warriors of the tribe of Carad rejoiced, but his enemies and the envious were grieved, particularly the family of Zeead.

Amarah went home, and his regret and affliction increased ; he laid himself down at full length, and a fever and trembling attacked him, and his knees and legs pained him, and he was fearfully indisposed. He sent for his brother Rebia, and wept before him : O brother, said he, if Ibla escape me, I shall die of grief, and no one will know of my death. Amarah, said Rebia, verily you have

\* An island in the Persian Gulf.



done a deed you ought not to have done. We must now consider this slave as our equal. From the first, I never wished you to interfere with Ibla, or connect yourself with the tribe of Carad; and now that this vile slave has liberated her from slavery we can do nothing with her, and cannot succeed, unless her father indeed be inclined towards you. To-morrow I will go and see about your business, and if I find that he still wishes for you, it may be accomplished: otherwise make your heart easy, Amarah; for if he inclines towards Antar on account of his courage, we will consult how to destroy him, and we will deprive him of life ere he actually obtain her.

Thus were his alarms and jealousies in part relieved. He waited patiently till the next day, when he dressed himself in fine clothes, and perfumed himself, and sent for Malik and his son Amroo, who attended him and complimented him; and instantly Amarah arose and received them with all due courtesy. And Malik said to Amarah, What do you wish of us? Most noble and excellent sir, I only invited you to-day, he replied, that I might see whether your heart was pleased in marrying that guarded pearl and concealed jewel to that black slave, that feeder of camels and sheep, whom the horsemen have preferred to their own rank and condition. Thus will your daughter be disgraced amongst the noble Arabs. If indeed you do such a deed, it will be impossible for us to remain in



this land. We only promised so to Antar, and only admitted him to our relationship and rank, said Malik, when he assisted us in the battle and conflict; but we never thought he could escape safe out of those perils, and rout such armies.

Well, said Amarah, to-morrow when we repair to King Zoheir, and when we are in full assembly, I will demand your daughter; do you assent and settle the amount of the dower, and when once the dower is decided on, neither King Zoheir nor any one else can say any thing to the contrary: and I promise you that the dower shall be a thousand he and she camels, and a thousand head of sheep, and twenty \*Ooshareeyi camels, and twenty horses of the noblest breed, and a hundred silk robes, and fifty satin garments spangled rich in gold, and twenty strings of the finest jewels, and a hundred skins of wine for the marriage feast, and a hundred male, and as many female slaves.

Malik, overjoyed, agreed to this proposal; Amarah, too, flattered himself he should succeed in his expectations; and soon after Malik and his son went home, and tarried there till the morning. The next day King Zoheir was sitting in his tent, surrounded by the nobles of the tribe of Abs, when Amarah and the family of Zeead presented themselves before him: they had greatly enlarged their turbans, and seated themselves according to their rank on the left of the King, and Antar and the

\* That endure ten days on a journey.



Carad tribe were on the right, and the horsemen took their places. O Chief, said Amarah, turning towards Malik, do you think my rank mean, or my connexion low? Are you not, said Malik, one of our illustrious horsemen? We are now in the presence of King Zoheir, continued Amarah, and I come to you as a suitor to your daughter, and I am solicitous for your favour; therefore decide on the marriage dower and donation, and demand even what the princes of the universe would fail in giving.

All this passed, and Antar sat still and heard it and observed; and he was convinced his uncle Malik favoured the Zeead family, and he feared that if his uncle should decide on fixing the marriage donation with Amarah, and should confirm it, Ibla would pass out of his hands, and he would have no more to say—in vain he would reproach and revile. Thus roused by the urgency of the moment, he started up, and turning towards Amarah, exclaimed, Thou he-goat of a man—thou refuse!—thou villain! Dost thou at such a time as this demand Ibla in marriage?—thou coward, did not I demand her when she was in the midst of twelve thousand warriors, waving their bone-cleaving swords, and thou and thy brother were flying among the rocks and the wilds? I then descended—I exposed my life in her dangers, and liberated her from the man that had captured her; but, now that she is in the tent of her father and mother, thou wouldst demand her! By the faith of an illustrious Arab, thou



dastard, if thou dost not give up thy pretensions to Ibla, I will bring down perdition upon thee, and I will curse thy relations and thy parents, and I will make the hour of thy wedding an hour of evil tid-  
ing to thyself and thy posterity!"

O Antar, said Amroo, Ibla is our daughter, and it is for us to command; no prince or chief is empowered to oblige us to marry her to any one but whom we choose and approve.

At these words the light became dark in his eyes—his hand hurried to his irresistible Dhami—he sprang from the ground on the back of his Abjer, resolved to put Malik and his son Amroo to death, and Rebia and Amarah too, and the whole family of Zeead; and to carry off Ibla, and live with her in the mountains: but he thought of King Zoheir's kindness, and how he had transferred him from servitude to honour and freedom; so he immediately changed his mind, and thus addressed the Absians.

"When the family of Carad are ungrateful, and  
"the family of Zeead are violent in their acts, then  
"there is no blame or reproach to me, if I protect  
"mine own honour and rights by arms or by stra-  
"tagem. Is not fire kindled from a Zanad when  
"the stone is rubbed against it? Enjoyment is  
"ever desired after absence, and approximation is  
"wished for after separation. I have been mer-  
"ciful to those who are not aware of the value of  
"my mercy, and my friendship has not been pro-



“perly appreciated. But after this forbearance I  
“shall act in another manner, till the towns and  
“deserts shall flow with my blood, and my sword  
“shall complain of fatigue in my hand, and my  
“joints shall murmur at the burthen of my belt.  
“Ye observed me well the day of Tey, and my  
“deeds with my Indian spear; and had my lance  
“a tongue, it would tell ye of the splitting of ribs  
“in the battle. How many challengers called to  
“me on the day of conflict, and hailed me, and I  
“answered each antagonist. O family of Zeead,  
“ye have opposed a noble lion that never flinches  
“from the fight—artless in speech and deeds—with  
“a sword that cleaves heads and arms. Be on thy  
“guard then, O Amroo, on thy guard against him.  
“Let not thine eyelids be weighed down with sleep.  
“But had I not a chief who commands me, liberal  
“in speech, and exalted in power, I would do  
“myself justice with my sword, and soon would I  
“show the difference between virtue and outrage.”

When Antar had finished, the chiefs admired his eloquence: King Zoheir went up to him, and made him dismount. May God never renounce thy mouth! said he: may no one ever harm thee, O thou protector of the tribes! And then turning towards Malik, Ibla's father, he said—How is it that you will not marry your daughter to a hero? You engaged her to him when he liberated her from her perilous situation! My lord, my daughter is in my tent, said Malik; you may command her, and



marry her to whom you please : I will not oppose your directions, and I will not swerve from your orders. Then, said King Zoheir, Ibla can belong to no one but our defender, the brave Antar. So they sat down and ate, and thus they remained till dark, when they went home, each to his tent.



## CHAPTER V.

Now then, said Amarah to Rebia, when they had retired, now that Antar has vanquished me, and has taken Ibla by force, I can no longer remain in this country; I must go and roam about the wilds and deserts. Cheer up, Amarah, said Rebia; let us still contrive the means to overthrow him, and to make him drink of the cup of destruction and death. Rebia left Amarah and went home, and sent for Malik and Amroo; and when they arrived he said unto Malik, Pretend to be good friends with Antar; appear very kind to him, and do not prevent his entering your tents. Sooth him with gentle words, and when he comes to you, ask him about the dower for Ibla; then he will say—what do you wish? tell him you only demand a thousand Asafeer\* camels, that your daughter may pride herself in them above the high and low.

Know then, Malik, that these camels are in the possession of Monzar, son of Massema†, the King of the Arabs, and the lieutenant of Nushirvan; and I know that Antar, in the greatness of his courage,

\* A particular species of camel used for riding, called also Asafeeri Numan—as being found in his country.

† Her name was Mawia—and for her numerous virtues called Massema, i. e. water of heaven.



will go in search of them among the tribe of Shibān, and he will expose his life to danger and death, and you will never see him again. Malik eagerly listened to his advice; and it happened on that day that Antar was out hunting; and when he returned in the evening, his uncle gave him the kindest reception, and ordered a slave to take away what he had brought in: he introduced him into his house, and gave him meat to eat, and wine to drink, and he spent part of the night in his company. Antar was much pleased at this reception and kind treatment, and thought that his wishes with respect to Iblā would be accomplished, for he knew not the plot conceived against him. So they continued to show these civilities to Antar, and he was in raptures in the enjoyment of Iblā's conversation for ten days.

On the night of the eleventh day, Malik was more than usually kind to him; and when the noble warriors had separated for the night, and Shedad had gone home, and also Zakhmetulgiwad and the rest of the tribe of Carad, and no one remained but Antar, his uncle Malik, Amroo, and Shereeah, Malik's wife, and Iblā, their daughter, Malik plied Antar with wine till he made him drunk, when he addressed him and said; Tell me, I pray you, what you wish to be done for my daughter Iblā: you have prohibited all suitors; and do you intend to take her by force, without any marriage gift or



dower, and will you bring disgrace upon us in every part of the world? That can never be, said Antar, were I even to drink of the cup of death and condemnation. God forbid that this guarded pearl and this concealed jewel should be thus sold to the highest bidder. I am only waiting orders—tell me what you demand, ask whatever you choose, that I may grant her what will give her reason to pride herself above the chiefs of the earth. Nephew, said Malik, I will not make you engage for what is beyond your power, and I will not demand of you but what an Arab would demand; such as he and she camels. I ask of you then a thousand Asafeer camels, that my daughter may boast of them; for in our tribe there are none; nor are there any like them in Cahtan. Then will you and I obtain all our wishes and our desires, and we shall destroy our enemies and those that envy us,—this is all I ask of you, and then will I make your marriage feast out of my own property, and will give you whatever may be required of my own he and she camels; all our possessions shall be united, and we will live in perpetual felicity. Malik continued talking with Antar in this manner till he gave way and consented; and he knew not that the camels were in the kingdom of Monzar, the King of the Princes of the Arabs, and the lieutenant of Chosroe Nushirvan, whose armies were innumerable.

Uncle, said he, I will give you these camels



loaded with the treasures of their masters ; but give me your hand, and betroth me to your daughter, and thus show me the purity of your intentions. So Malik gave him his hand, and a fire blazed in his heart. Antar's joy was excessive, his bosom heaved, and he was all delight—he started on his feet—he took off his clothes, and put them on his uncle ; and Ibla saw Antar's arms, and smiled. What art thou smiling at, fair damsel ? said Antar. At those wounds, she replied ; for were they on the body of any other person, he would have died, and drank the cup of death and annihilation : but thou art unhurt by them. Her words descended to his heart cooler than the purest water, and he thus addressed her :

“ The pretty Ibla laughed when she saw that I  
“ was black, and that my ribs were scratched with  
“ the spears. Do not laugh nor be astonished when  
“ the horsemen and armies surround me. The  
“ spear-barb is like death in my hand, and on it are  
“ various figures traced in blood. I am indeed  
“ surprised how any one can see my form in the day  
“ of contests, and survive.”

He then departed to his mother's tent, for he was restless, and the words of Ibla were as a blazing fire in his heart. He wakened his brother Shiboob, and told him to get ready his horse Abjer—he did as he was bid ; Antar clothed himself in armour, and stood like a tower. Where art thou going ? said Shiboob, that I may show thee the nearest roads. Well, said Antar, tell me the



nearest road to the land of Irak, for there are many Arabs in that country, and their property and camels very abundant; with them is my object, and what my uncle has demanded.

Shiboob trembled and was confounded at this intelligence, for he knew the country. Why not stop till morning, said he, that thou mayst acquaint King Zoheir and Prince Malik? for they may perhaps be able to assist thee in this affair. Return, my brother, and expose not thy life to difficulties and dangers. Away! away! cried Antar; not a word; none but the Creator of mankind can aid me; I must destroy my accursed enemies. Mine be the dark and nightly course, after the manner of mighty heroes; for if I travel by day they will lay plots against me. Shiboob was convinced he was right, and conducted him to the land of Irak. And they continued their way over the wilds and the deserts till the third hour, when on a sudden there arose a great dust, and there appeared a troop of horsemen like eagles. As soon as they saw Antar, they closed their vizors and waved their lances, and slackened their bridles and fixed their spears: and when they came near to him they cried out, Down, down, from that steed, thou dastard; strip off those accoutrements of war and armour, or we annihilate thee! whither art thou going over the plain? Here we have remained in expectation of thee. As soon as Antar heard these words, he shook his spear in his hand, rushed on-



ward, roaring like a lion, and darted towards them with a heart fearless of death and danger,—thus speaking:—

“ Fortune insults me as if I were day and night  
“ her foe ; the enemy seek me in every peril, and  
“ imagine I am unable to fight ; but were they to  
“ present to me the form of death itself as an anta-  
“ tagonist, I would imbrue its hands in the blood  
“ of its own wounds.”

He attacked them, and his assault was like the assault of the most furious lion : he rushed upon their chief, when lo ! he let fall his vizor from his face and cried out, Check thine arm, O Knight of the age ! sufficient is the mischief and danger, for I am thy friend Harith, son of King Zoheir. Antar threw down his spear, dismounted, and ran towards him, and kissed his hand.

Now Harith was an undaunted warrior, in the prime of youth, and eloquent in speech ; he loved Antar, and was much interested about him, like his brother Malik ; and the cause of his meeting Antar in the deserts was, that he had been invited to a feast by the tribe of Ghiftan, and was returning. He met Antar, and the above passed. And when he saw that death was hurrying from the ends of his fingers, and that destruction was stamped upon his spear, he let down his vizor, and Antar recognized him, and dismounted and saluted him.

Why, my lord, said he, why hast thou acted thus ?



Thou hast endangered thine own life, and those that were with thee. Harith smiled, and was surprised at his humility, after such proof of his superiority over him. God prosper thee, O Aboolfawaris, said he, jewel of the multitude ! whither art thou bound, and what great expedition hast thou undertaken ? He who wishes, replied Antar, that his nuptial ceremony should be performed, must expose his life to danger. Thou knowest what dangers and what disgraces I have submitted to on account of my cousin Ibla, in order that her father might give her to me. He has demanded of me a marriage dower, and a settlement, and I must bring what he requires from Irak.

Terrified at Antar's words, cried Harith, What is it thou sayest, Aboolfawaris ? For God's sake return with me ; trouble not thyself about such matters, and do not banish thyself from amongst us : our property is not so small ; and verily I am astonished how my father and brother could let thee depart alone. I told no one of my departure, said Antar : my lord, my uncle demands of me camels that we have not, and are not in our tribe, and I have engaged to procure them, and I have said yes : and he thus continued.

“ Say not no, after thou hast said yes, for thou  
“ wilt be clothed in shame, and repent. Truly, no,  
“ after yes, is foul ; and base is the word no, after  
“ yes. When thou wouldst have a friend, associate



“ with a noble person, one who is chaste, modest,  
“ and liberal ; and when he says no to a thing, do  
“ thou also say no, and when thou sayest yes, let  
“ him also say yes.”

Harith was surprised at Antar's eloquence and virtuous mind, and his admiration of him increased. If such is thy business, said he, I will accompany thee and assist thee in all thy difficulties. I cannot possibly consent to that, replied Antar ; return with thy warriors to thine own country. So Antar bade him farewell and departed over the wilds and deserts, and Harith and his people returned, praising Antar's intrepidity and eloquence. Antar and Shiboob proceeded on their journey, Shiboob ever showing the way, till evening coming on, they sought a pool of water where they might repose from their fatigues, and at length they reached a tent pitched near a spring ; and behold there was an old Sheikh, with his back bent. They made towards him.

“ An old man was walking along the ground,  
“ and his face almost touched his knees. So I said  
“ to him, Why art thou thus stooping ? He said, as  
“ he his waved hands towards me, My youth is lost  
“ somewhere on the ground, and I am stooping in  
“ search of it.”

He welcomed them, and brought them a cup of milk, cooled in the wind : Antar took the milk and drank, and gave some to his brother, and came to



the door of the tent. The old Sheikh laid pillows for them, and presented viands, receiving them in the most hospitable manner. And when they had finished eating, the Sheikh made bold to ask Antar his adventures, and why he was travelling. So he related to him all that had passed with his uncle Malik, and what he had demanded as a marriage dower.

May God disgrace and overthrow and destroy thy uncle, and not save him! exclaimed the old man; for his only object in making this demand of thee is to annihilate and ruin thee. How is that, said Antar, how so? Know, Aboolfawaris, replied he, that these Asafeer camels are only to be found among a tribe called the tribe of Shiban, and their chief is King Monzar, son of Massema, the lieutenant of King Chosroe, whose armies are innumerable, whose power is irresistible, and he rules all the Arabs of the wilds and the deserts; and if thou wert to carry off these camels, who is able to protect thee from King Monzar, or shelter thee? My advice is, that thou shouldst return home, and not expose thy life to dangers and death.

Antar remained that night in the tent, and the next day mounted his Abjer, bade the Sheikh farewell, and thanked him. Shiboob attended him by his side, and they set out in quest of the land of Hirah; and when they had advanced some distance,



Antar thought of Ibla, and his absence from her, and what he had suffered for her, and thus spoke :

“ In the land of Shurebah are defiles and valleys ;  
“ I have quitted them, and its inhabitants live in  
“ my heart: fixed are they therein, and in my  
“ eyes; and even when they are absent from me,  
“ they dwell in the black of mine eye; and when the  
“ lightning flashes from their land, I shed tears of  
“ blood, and pass the night leagued with sleepless-  
“ ness. The breeze of the fragrant plants makes  
“ me remember the luscious balmy airs of the  
“ Zatoool-irsad. O Ibla, let thy visionary phantom  
“ appear to me, and infuse soft slumbers over my  
“ distracted heart! O Ibla, were it not for my love  
“ of thee, I would not be with so few friends and so  
“ many enemies! I am departing, and the back of  
“ my horse shall be my resting-place; and my  
“ sword and mail my pillow, till I trample down  
“ the lands of Irak, and destroy their deserts and  
“ their cities. When the market for the sale of  
“ lives is established, and they cry out, and the  
“ criers proclaim the goods, and I behold the troops  
“ stirring up the war-dust with the thrusts of spears  
“ and sharp scimitars—then will I disperse their  
“ horsemen, and the foe shall be cut down deprived  
“ of their hands. The eyes of the envious shall  
“ watch, but the eyes of the pure and the faithful  
“ shall sleep; and I will return with numerous



“Asafeer camels that my love shall procure, and  
“Shiboob be my guide.”

As soon as he had finished, his tears flowed abundantly. They travelled on till they reached the land of Hirah, where they saw populous towns, plains abounding in flowing streams, date trees and warbling birds, and sweetly smelling flowers; and the country appeared like a blessing to enliven the sorrowing heart; and the camels were grazing, and straying about the land; and they were of various colours, like the flowers of a garden; and there were she camels, and young camels, and slaves and attendants. And as soon as he saw them he was all anxiety, quite out of breath with eagerness. And he felt that his uncle had sent him on this commission to insure his death and destruction, unless his intrepidity should guide him through.

Ebe Reeah, said he to Shiboob, I well know that this is a land great in power, and in no region is there one to be compared to it. We have nothing for it but prudence and daring fortitude in danger, and a timely submission to power, that we may obtain what we are in search of, and return rejoicing and successful. Hasten then, son of my mother, and look after these Asafeer camels, and mark them, whilst I let my horse Abjer rest himself. Shiboob consented to what he directed, and leaving his bow and quiver, disguised himself in the clothes of a slave, and feigned himself sick. Thus he went



towards the pastures, where he saw the camels like young brides; and when the slaves marked Shiboob, they sprang towards him, welcomed him, and made him sit down, and took out some of their provisions, and made him eat, asking him whence he came, and what had happened to him.

I am a slave of the tribe of Zebeed, said he, and Shedad is my master's name; and he is a stubborn, cruel man, and had no compassion for his slaves, male or female. So I have run away and have left him, and my wish is to meet some one who will protect me from him. Remain with us as long as thou pleasest, my cousin, said the slaves, pitying him, and be welcome! and thy time shall pass pleasantly enough.

Very thankful was he, and remained with them the rest of the day, and he told them all manner of lies and deceitful tales till he had marked out the Asafeer camels, and he saw they were the miracles of the age; and when evening came on, the slaves and attendants drove away the camels, and sought their habitations and homes, and Shiboob went with them. But when they came nigh to the tents, it being now dark, he separated from them and gave his feet to the wind, seeking the plain till he was in the presence of Antar, who sprang up to meet him, exclaiming—Tell me, O Ebe Reeah, what news hast thou? Nothing, said Shiboob, but that we are in a dangerous position, and under fate



and destiny, unless the Lord of Heaven is our defender and protector.

O Shiboob, said Antar, is it not well known that when a slave exposes his life to the abyss of danger, he is exalted to the height of glory? They then concealed themselves till morning dawned, when Antar clad and incased himself in armour till he appeared like a tower, or a fragment rent from a mountain; and he went forward till he reached the pastures, crouching along as a wolf after a sheep.

And when it was day, the Asafeer camels were driven to graze, and behind every thousand she camels were ten slaves to attend them, that the males might not annoy them. The she camels ranged about grazing, and the slaves began to amuse themselves; for they were slaves of the King of the Arab chiefs, and knew not what it was to be attacked.

These are the Asafeer camels, said Shiboob, so make thy plan, and act as it seems best to thee. Run on, said Antar, and occupy the road to Hirah, so that their cries be not raised against us, ere we be far away out of this country. As thou pleasest, brother, said Shiboob. And he moved along on tiptoe over the plain, till he came in the rear of the slaves, when he seated himself on his knees, and emptying his quiver of arrows before him, waited their attack. As to Antar, he urged on Abjer, and plunged amongst the he and she camels, and cut off a thousand of the



Asafeer camels with his spear, crying out to the slaves—Ye base born, drive away these camels, and on before me! or my sword will be stained with your blood.

When the slaves heard Antar, they were terrified at his enormous bulk and gigantic shape, and the rolling of his eyes, and the weight of his arms. They drove the camels before him, and goaded them on with the points of their spears, and they fled away before them like eagles. And thus they proceeded till about the third hour, when behold a great dust arose and darkened the land; and when it dispersed there appeared a party of Arabs of the tribe of Zakhm and Juzam, about twelve thousand horsemen; all hardy warriors, armed with sharp swords and long spears, screaming out—Whither are ye going, ye dastards—hence is there no escape out of this land!

Now the cause of the arrival of this troop of horsemen was as follows—The slaves that had escaped from Antar and Shiboob sought their homes and habitations, and it happened that they encountered the train and equipage of Monzar on a hunting party, attended by his warriors and his troops; who, turning towards his son Numan—Speed your horse on a little, my son, said he, and bring me intelligence of these shepherds. Now Numan was his eldest son. So Numan directed his horse towards the slaves, and inquired whither they came. O



Prince, said the shepherds, a black Knight, mounted on a black steed, and whose voice is the roar of a lion, darted down upon us and seized a thousand of the Asafeer camels, and carried them off.

No sooner had Numan heard this account of the shepherds than he cried out to the men and the warriors that accompanied him, and slackening his horse's bridle, galloped after Antar, and twelve thousand in number were the lion heroes that followed him. And they halted not till they overtook Antar, as we mentioned, and cried out as we described.

When Antar saw them, he smiled, for battle was his joy and delight. O! thou black born, said he to Shiboob, I want thee to guard the camels, whilst I show thee a day of horrors among these miscreants. He then turned the camels into a mountain cave, and received the warriors as the parched-up earth receives the first of the rain; and he penetrated through the thick dust with blows irresistible and never failing. Whatever he struck, he slew, and wherever he thrust, he hurled down; and for one hour he overwhelmed them in death and perdition; and the foremost shrunk back upon the rear, crying out at him from a distance, for no one dared to approach the spot where he was. As to Shiboob, the slaves betrayed him, and refused to drive on the camels.

But when Numan saw that his troops and men



fell back, and perceived how Antar was handling them in the combat, his mind and senses were greatly agitated, and he cried out to them—May God disgrace you among the Arabs!—are you reduced to this by a single black slave, a mean, paltry herdsman? The horsemen took courage, and poured down upon Antar from all sides, but Antar continually slaughtered them, always gaining upon them, never flinching, though their numbers were immense. Thus was he in the midst of dangers, when lo! his horse stumbled, and throwing him on the ground, rushed from out the thick dust and tumult, his saddle unoccupied by his master Antar. Shiboob thought he was killed and trampled to death: the tears flowed from his eyes, he gave his feet to the winds, and he sought the wide desert, whilst the slaves and shepherds cried out to the horsemen and warriors, who pursued Shiboob from all quarters; and they were seventy in number, all after Shiboob, who depended on the power of his muscles. The horses were straining themselves to catch him, but they could not pass him, or come up with him, from the grey dawn of day till the sun became tinged with yellow. But when evening came on, woe and dismay fell upon him, and just as he was convinced of his ruin and death, he reached a cavern in the hollow of a mountain, and near it stood a swarthy youth tending sheep; before him was a fire blazing; and he was sitting down



preparing his dinner, and his sheep were grazing in front of him. As soon as Shiboob saw him, he made towards him: Young man, he cried, help me—I put myself under thy protection, for I am a stranger, and I am exposed to peril and danger in this land. I am nearly dead, and my enemies have already slain my brother. Yes, by thy father, said the youth (for his heart had compassion on him), I will indeed protect thee, and I will not deliver thee up till I am myself slain. Enter the cavern, and consider thyself secure from the deceits of the wicked.

Shiboob entered the cave, where he had scarcely concealed himself, when the horsemen arrived, fleet as eagles, shouting aloud—Boy, son of a cuckold, bring out to us that devil who has slain our horsemen and staggered our senses, that we may tear his body in pieces with the points of the spear, and hack him with the blades of our scimitars. God curse him who gave him birth! how strong are his muscles!

Arabs, said the shepherd, grant him to me, I pray ye, and accept of my guarantee for him, for I have protected him, knowing nothing about you; he is under my security and protection. Thine is not and never shall be any protection, cried they, so bring him out, or we will slay thee together with him for; his brother has destroyed three thousand of our famed horsemen; he is indeed a very devil,



and we have experienced from him what we never saw even from the Genii.

When the peasant heard them he was fearfully alarmed, for were he to oppose them, they would soon destroy him. O Arabs, said he, do but remove about seventy paces from the cavern door, that I may enter and bring him out of my protection. Do so, said they; and they retired from the cavern, and the shepherd entered, and found Shiboob trembling for his life. You have heard, young man, said the shepherd, what has passed between me and these men. My vows have been overruled, and I have exposed myself to death and annihilation. I can do nothing towards your escape, but at the hazard of my own life; yet will I not forfeit my protection. Had I but ten horsemen of the tribe of Asad, they should not approach you, no not one of them; but I am alone in this wilderness and desert. So throw off your clothes, and put on mine; take these provisions and this wallet, sling it over your shoulder, and with my staff in your hand hasten out of the cavern, and drive away the sheep, and when you come up to them, say—Arabs, I went into the cave, in order to bring him out, but he will not stir, so come along, and I will show him to you—they will dismount and enter the cavern, and then do you look after yourself.



Shiboob thanked him from his heart for his kind assistance : he slung on the wallet, and took the staff in his hand, and went out of the cavern, and the darkness of night concealed him from the eyes of observers ; and when he came up to them he spoke to them as the shepherd had directed him : they immediately dismounted and went towards the cavern ; but Shiboob gave his feet to the wind, and traversed the rocky crags until he was far off among the wilds and the deserts : and thus he secured his life, and sought relief from the contents of the wallet.

In the mean time the Shibanians entered the cave, and dragged out the shepherd, thinking it was Shiboob ; they looked at him by the light of the fire, and they saw it was the shepherd dressed in Shiboob's clothes ; for he had preferred to expose his life to death and torture, rather than discredit his protection. Why hast thou done this deed, cried they, and given up thy life to death and perdition for the sake of a stranger ?

Arabs, replied the shepherd, he sought my protection, and I protected him. You came in search of him ; you would not accept my proposal, and I was not able to drive you away. But if I have enraged you, kill me at once, and I shall have rescued him by the sacrifice of my life and existence, and shall not have forfeited my word, or broken my faith. Moreover between you and me there is no



blood or revenge. I have indeed fallen into your power: but if you will release me, I will thank you in every part of the world; otherwise do as you list, and decide as you judge best.

The Shibanians were astonished, and they could not find it in their hearts to kill him. He indeed rejoiced in his friendly act, and the preservation of his duty; so they let him go, and returned vexed and dispirited. As to Shiboob, as soon as he was safe, he travelled on till morning, passing over plains and deserts; but what was most grievous to him was the thought of returning to the tribe of Abs, and the triumph of his foes and the envious; particularly the family of Zeead, and the ruffian Amarah, and Shas and Rebia: then he wept for his brother Antar, in these verses.

“ O Knight of the Horse, why, alas, has the steed  
“ to mourn thee? why, alas, has the barb of the  
“ spear to announce thy death in wailings? O that  
“ the day had never been, that I saw thee felled  
“ to the earth, cut down—stretched out—and the  
“ points of the lances aimed at thee! Could the  
“ vicissitudes of fortune accept of any ransom, oh!  
“ I would have redeemed thee from the calamities  
“ of fortune! Thine uncle has in his wiles and  
“ frauds made thee drink of the cup. But may  
“ thy cup-bearer, O son of my mother, never taste  
“ of the moisture of dew! and thy cousin will  
“ mourn thee, and she belongs to thy foe, whose



“ slave thou wouldst never consent to be. O Knight  
“ of the Horse, I have no strength of mind—I  
“ have not a heart that can ever feel consolation for  
“ thee in my sorrows ! and the war-steed amongst  
“ the troopers as he neighs will turn towards thee,  
“ mourning for thee, like a childless woman in  
“ despair.”

And Shiboob went on, passing over deserts and wilds, seeking the tribe of Abs and Adnan, whilst his tears flowed in streams. But as to Antar, when his horse stumbled beneath him, he started on his legs, brandished his sword in his right, supported his shield on his left, and made towards the warriors—he slew them till he made mounds of dead, he overwhelmed them with his shouts, bellowing out—O Ibla, by thine eyes, will I slay this day these horsemen ! and he rushed upon them like a furious lion, till the blood flowed from all parts of his body. And in the thickest of the battle he happened to step on a skull, and his feet slipping from under him, he fell down at his full length. And they gave him not time to rise ere they bound fast his shoulders, his arms, and his ribs and his feet, and brought him before Numan.

The Chief was all astonishment at the horror of his make, at the immensity of his stature, and the agitation of his eyes. He ordered them to tie him across the back of his horse and convey him to the King, that he might do what he thought proper with



him. They obeyed his orders, and bound him on the back of Abjer, and they all returned to the land of Hirah. At the moment of their arrival, King Monzar returned from hunting. When, behold there appeared against them a lion of the lions of Khifan. Now the wild beasts of Khifan were proverbial; and he came upon them with a loud roar, and the fierce warriors attacked him. Numan presented Antar to his father, and when he looked at him, he was terrified and confounded.

What Arab art thou? said he. My lord, replied Antar, I am of the tribe of the noble Abs. One of its warriors, demanded Monzar, or one of its slaves? Nobility, my lord, said Antar, amongst liberal men, is the thrust of the spear, the blow of the sword, and patience beneath the battle dust. I am the physician of the tribe of Abs when they are in sickness, their protector in disgrace, the defender of their wives when they are in trouble, and their horseman when they are in glory, and their sword when they rush to arms.

Monzar was astonished at his fluency of speech, his magnanimity and his intrepidity, for he was then in the dishonourable state of a prisoner, and force had overpowered him. What urged thee to this violence on my property, added Monzar, and seizure of my camels? My lord, said Antar, the tyranny of my uncle obliged me to this act: for I was brought up with his daughter, and I had



passed my life in her service. And when he saw me demand her in marriage, he asked of me as a marriage dower, a thousand Asafeer camels. I was ignorant, and knew nothing about them ; so I consented to his demand, and set out in quest of them ; I have outraged you, and am consequently reduced to this miserable state.

Hast thou then, said Monzar, with all this fortitude and eloquence, and propriety of manners, exposed thy life to the sea of death, and endangered thine existence for the sake of an Arab girl ? Yes, my lord, said Antar ; it is love that emboldens man to encounter dangers and horrors ; and no lover is excusable but he who tastes the bitterness of absence after the sweetness of enjoyment ; and there is no peril to be apprehended, but from a look from beneath the corner of a veil ; and what misfortune can drive man to his destruction, but a woman who is the root and branch of it ! Then tears filled his eyes, and sighs burst from his sorrowing heart, as he thus exclaimed :

“ The eyelashes of the songstress from the corner  
“ of the veil are more cutting than the edge of the  
“ cleaving scimitars ; and when they wound the  
“ brave are humbled, and the corners of their eyes  
“ are flooded with tears. May God cause my uncle  
“ to drink of the draught of death at my hand !  
“ may his hand be withered, and his fingers palsied !  
“ for how could he drive one like me to destruc-



“tion by his arts, and make my hopes depend on  
“the completion of his avaricious projects? Truly  
“Ibla, on the day of departure, bade me adieu,  
“and said I should never return. O lightnings!  
“waft my salutation to her, and to all the places  
“and pastures where she dwells. O ye dwellers  
“in the forests of Tamarisks, if I die, mourn for  
“me when my eyes are plucked out by the hun-  
“gry fowls of the air. O ye steeds, mourn for a  
“Knight who could engage the lions of death in  
“the field of battle. Alas, I am an outcast, and  
“in sorrow. I am humbled into galling fetters,  
“fetters that cut to my soul.”

When Antar had finished, Monzar was surprised at his eloquence and fortitude, and strength of mind and virtue. Now Monzar himself was one of the most eloquent of Arabs, and he was convinced that Antar was sincere in his grief; but he knew not the story of his life. Whilst Antar and Monzar were conversing, behold the people ran away from their presence. On inquiring what was the matter, O victorious and irresistible monarch, they exclaimed, a savage lion has appeared among us, is destroying the horsemen, and dispersing the brave heroes. Spears make no impression on his carcass, and no one dares to attack him. Assault him, cried the King, before he takes refuge in the forest, and cuts off the road of the travellers, and renders the ways unsafe, and we therefore be dishonoured.



As soon as Antar heard this, his afflictions were relieved. Tell your people to expose me to this lion, said he to the King, and if he should destroy me, you will be amply revenged, and your dishonour be cleared up: for I have slaughtered your troops, and destroyed your warriors; but should I slay the lion, reward me as I deserve, and do not refuse me justice. The King ordered the cords to be loosened: the guards came up to him and untied his hands, and were about to untie his feet also; but he cried out, Loosen only my hands, leave my feet bound as they are, that there may be no retreat from the lion. He grasped his sword and his shield, and jumping along in his fetters, he thus exclaimed.

“Come on, thou dog of the forests and the hills!  
“this day at my hand will I make thee drink of  
“death. Soon wilt thou meet a Knight, a lion war-  
“rior, a chief tried in battle. O then, attack not one  
“like me, for I am a chosen hero. Attack the  
“horsemen, thou dog of the waste, but whither  
“wilt thou escape from me this day? Take this  
“from my cleaving sword, that deals sorrows,  
“deaths, and pestilence from the slave of a tribe,  
“that braves death and woe, and never fails.”

Monzar was much astonished at his address to the lion, and he advanced with his attendants, to behold what Antar might do. And when they came near him, they perceived it was an immense



lion, of the size of a camel, with broad nostrils and long claws ; his face was wide, and ghastly was his form ; his strength swelling ; he grinned with his teeth clenched like a vice, and the corners of his jaws were like grappling irons. When the lion beheld Antar in his fetters, he crouched to the ground, and extended himself out ; his mane bristled up ; he made a spring at him : and as he approached, Antar met him with his sword, which entered by his forehead, and penetrated through him, issuing out at the extremity of his back bone. O by Abs and Adnan ! cried Antar, I will ever be the lover of Ibla. And the lion fell down, cut in twain, and cleft into two equal portions ; for the spring of the lion, and the force of the arm of the glorious warrior, just met. Then, wiping his sword on the lion, he thus spoke.

“ Wilt thou ever know, O Ibla, the perils I have  
“ encountered in the land of Irak ? My uncle has  
“ beguiled me with his hypocrisy and artifice, and  
“ has acted barbarously towards me in demanding  
“ the marriage dower. I plunged myself into a sea  
“ of deaths, and repaired to Irak, without friends.  
“ I drove away the camels and the herdsmen single  
“ handed ; and I was returning home burning with  
“ the flame of anxious love. I quitted them not  
“ till there arose behind me the dust of the hoofs of  
“ the high mettled steeds. I encountered on every  
“ side the war dust, and illumined it with my thin  
“ bladed falchion, whilst the horsemen clamoured



“ beneath it, so that I thought the thunder had let  
“ loose its uproars. As I retired, I found that my  
“ uncle had deceived me with his frauds and stra-  
“ tagems. But I did not fail till my horse was ex-  
“ hausted, and faltered in the charge, and the  
“ crush of combats. Then I dismounted and drove  
“ away whole armies with my sword, as I would  
“ have driven away the camels. I rushed upon the  
“ horsemen that fiercely scoured the plain, piercing  
“ chests and eyeballs ; but at the close of the day  
“ I was wearied and made captive ; for my elbows  
“ and my legs were deprived of all strength. They  
“ dragged me to a noble prince, high and mag-  
“ nificent—May his glory endure ! Then too I  
“ engaged a lion, fierce in the onset, and harsh of  
“ heart, with a face like the circumference of a  
“ shield, whose eyeballs flashed fire like hot coals.  
“ I rushed at him with my sword. I met him in  
“ my fetters, so that Monzar might bestow on me  
“ what might gratify my uncle, and favour me with  
“ the desired camels.”

Monzar heard him, and beheld his acts. This is verily a miracle of the time, and the wonder of the age and world, said he to his attendants ; his intrepidity and eloquence and perseverance are enough to confound the universe ; with him I will effect with Chosroe what is the object of my wishes, and I will establish the superiority of the Arabs over the Persians.



Now Monzar was an intelligent man, and very regular in the administration of justice, and prudent in policy. For this reason Chosroe had appointed him King over the Arabs; and when he was present in the palace of Chosroe, he enjoyed superior dignities, and he was never styled but as King of the Arabs. And Chosroe used to treat him as a friend, and to eat and drink with him; and when they were busy in conversation, Monzar used to describe to him the peculiarities of Mecca and the sacred shrine, and their glory over the Deelimites and the Persians, and used to recite to him the verses of the eloquent men. And Chosroe, in his impartiality, was pleased with him, and enjoyed his society, and loved to dignify him with presents of gold and silver; for the Chosroes of Persia were renowned for their love of justice and impartiality, and abhorred oppression and violence, ruling mankind with liberality and generosity. He had over his head a bell of red gold, and a chain attached to it on the outside of the palace; and whenever he touched the bell, the attendants went out and complainants entered his presence; and he decided such matters himself.

Now it happened that Monzar, previous to Antar's falling into his hands, had visited Modayin, and presented himself to Chosroe, and staid with him some days, and he was honoured with a rich robe and various presents. One of the officers envied him, and when he was alone with the King,



he ventured to say, Why do you so honour, O King, this wild Bedoween, this worshipper of stone, and raise his dignity so high? Whether he is absent or present, he is a poor despicable wretch; for all the Arabs are but shepherds, and worshippers of images: there is no religion, no faith, among them; and they are only ennobled by theft and cunning, and robberies and rogueries.

This officer thus became jealous of the honours enjoyed by Monzar, and his heart was estranged from him. And he was one of the warriors of Deelim, and was a leader of twenty thousand Persians, and he was called Khosrewan, the son of Jorham. He was always talking contemptuously of the Arabs, repeating falsehoods of them, till at last he effected a change in the heart of the just King.

If, O King, said he, as he ended the conversation, thou art desirous of thoroughly understanding this man whom thou hast appointed over the Arabs, and of having a proof of his ignorance and ill-breeding, ask him to come and eat meat and dates; order the servants to give him dates from which the stones are not extracted, and to place before you dates ready stoned; and let there be instead of stones, almonds, sugar-plums, and skinned nuts, and see what he will do. Chosroe complied, and invited Monzar to eat meat and dates; and he ordered the servants to do as Khosrewan had recommended. So after dinner, the servants produced



the plates of dates. Chosroe and the Persians ate away and swallowed them, for there were no stones to throw aside. Monzar looked at them, and thought within himself—Most certainly to-day is a festival with them, for they are worshippers of fire; so I must eat like them, and must fashion my manners to theirs. So Monzar ate, and swallowed the stones; but one sadly puzzled him, so the attendants burst out into a loud laugh; and Chosroe also laughed. And Monzar was abashed at their pleasantry. May your glory last for ever, O King of the world, said he. But the wrath and indignation of Monzar increased. What makes your attendants laugh? said he. You have eaten dates and swallowed the stones, said Chosroe; 'tis for that we are laughing at you. I, O King, said Monzar, imitated you and your companions, and I ate as you ate, for I perceived you eating the dates and swallowing the stones, and I wished to do as you had done. Our dates, said Chosroe, are without stones; and instead of stones there are almonds and sugar-plums and peeled nuts, so that we eat them without trouble or annoyance. Why, said Monzar, did you not give me some of what you eat yourself? Still I am your guest. Yet this is a proof that I am an object of ridicule to you, and you have only invited me that you and your companions might expose me. But I am still at all times your slave, and indebted to your bounty for whatever you have thought proper to do unto me.



He remained some time longer with Chosroe, and then returned to the land of Hirah, having asked permission to revisit his family and native country. And when he reached his capital, he wrote letters to the tribes of Wayil and Bekir and Jelhema, and he said in the letters—Attack Modayin, plunder the people and the inhabitants, lay waste the villages, and put to the sword the merchants of Persia, and plunder the property of Deelim. Be afraid of no man, should any oppose you; but slaughter them and seize their property, and plunder them.

When these letters, in which the whole circumstance was described, reached the different tribes, they were greatly incensed, and sent Sewid the son of Amil to plunder the inhabitants. And Handala ransacked the stores and granaries, and seized the property of the travellers; and Harith the son of Joshem plundered the lands of Zilah, sparing neither high nor low. After this, confusion and rebellion rose up in the villages, and the whole country dreaded the Arabs. Many of the Persians were cut off, and the Persian merchants cried out from all quarters against Chosroe. The day of judgment seemed to have come upon him, and he was overwhelmed with shame. He desired his minister Mubidan to write to Monzar an account of all that had passed, and that he should punish the Arab tribes, or he would disperse them among the plains and the deserts.

So the minister wrote to Monzar a letter, in which



he said, "To him, whom we recognize as King of the Arabs! Truly the heart of the just King is greatly irritated against you, on account of the depredations committed by the Arabs on his subjects. You must slay the rebels and offenders, and chastise those that have oppressed the weak, if you are obedient to the Persian government, and attend to the orders of the imperial monarch; and peace be with you from the protecting fire!" He folded up the letter and sealed it and sent it to Monzar, and when it reached him, he opened it and read it, and wrote in answer to it these words:

"To him whom we recognise as the just King! Truly my character is despised amongst the Arabs, my reputation is on the decline, my authority amongst them is weakened, and my honour is considerably discredited, since they heard what you did to me about eating the dates. My power is at an end, because they think I am an object of ridicule with you; therefore have they renounced their allegiance to me, and have separated themselves from my dominion. Such are the acts they have committed, and they will not obey my commands. You must look after your own country, and mind your own administration."

When Chosroe received this answer, he read it, and understood its contents. Verily, said he, these vagabond Arabs have a design upon me, and this dog of dogs would trample upon me. But if I do not



degrade and humble him, I am not the King of the age.

Who, O King of the age, said the satrap Khosrewan, the original cause of all this trouble, is this Monzar, that you should trouble yourself about him? By your life, I am able to take him prisoner; I will slay his horsemen, and will destroy his allies. I will bring him and his children to you, bound with cords; and if you order me, I will kill them all, and will bring you his sons and his daughters, and most costly plunder.

Khosrewan, said Chosroe, you are the only person for this expedition, for it is all your doing; so prepare, and march with the troops under your command; and if you conquer the King of the Arabs, kill him not, but bring him to me a prisoner, that I may disgrace and punish him, and let him feel his situation; and afterwards I will grant him his life. Khosrewan accordingly made his preparations in three days, and set out with twenty thousand horsemen, armed with gilded shields and cleaving swords; and Khosrewan was at their head, like a lion.

But King Monzar, as soon as he observed Antar's blow at the lion, and remarked his eloquence and his poetry, felt assured that he was a distinguished hero and warrior, and he thought it prudent to spare his life, and not put him to death: but for the ends of justice he determined to keep him a prisoner.



So he detained him in custody ; saying, By the faith of an Arab, I will not proceed to extremities with respect to this black warrior, for his equal is not to be found in the whole world. Guard this horseman, said he to his sons, until an answer reach us to our letter from the Persian King ; and we will then persuade him that it is this wretch who has plundered the cities and killed his subjects, and who has excited against us the Arab hordes. This will give a good colour to our excuses in all points, and thus we shall gain our objects upon our enemies. So Antar remained with the King imprisoned and chained ; and Monzar entered Hirah and awaited the answer.

It was about the beginning of the day when Monzar mounted his horse, and rode out to inhale the news ; when lo ! a dust from the direction of Persia appeared, and the whole country was blackened and darkened, and from beneath it came forth Persian horsemen, and the armies of Deelim. Take your implements of war, cried Monzar, ply the blow and the thrust, and protect the families and the women, or eternal will be your disgrace ; for truly the offences against propriety in conversation, and the blunders of the tongue, are the calamities of man. And he sent for all the clans of the tribe of Shiban, and all the Arab hordes ; and the Persian troops gave them no rest, but poised their spears, and grasped their swords. The two parties met,



and attacked: blood abundantly flowed, eyes were fixed, and were scared. Khosrewan advanced: he assailed the tribes of Arabia, and his heart was overjoyed; he dashed towards the standard of Monzar; he overset them, and he destroyed the horsemen, and annihilated them.

Now Monzar had encountered the Persians with only twelve thousand men, and the evening did not close before four thousand of them were slaughtered, and the remainder returned, seeking safety in flight; the Persians pursuing them until the shades of night surrounded them; when the Persians dismounting to repose themselves, Khosrewan also halted and shouted aloud; and when they had pitched their tents and lighted their fires, he ordered his satraps and generals to surround the whole city of Hirah, and to guard the roads and highways.

But Monzar, who entered Hirah routed and discomfited, gnawed his hands from shame, and was quite bewildered and beside himself. He sat down attended by his three sons, Numan, Aswad, and Amroo; and whilst they were consulting and debating, in rushed a slave—O my lord, cried he, that Absian warrior who is in my custody, when he heard the uproar in the morning, asked me what was the matter? We informed him what had happened; then, said he, Conduct me to your King, that I may point out to him the means of destroying



his enemies, even were they as numerous as the sands of the desert. Produce him, said Monzar ; let us hear what he has to say, and let us release him from his fetters. But Antar was that day thinking of his cousin, and of his expedition to procure her dower, and to seize the Asafeer camels, and his falling into captivity, and his failure. Then, as he sighed from his overcharged heart, he thus recited :

“ Tell Zoheir and Malik of me, tell Ibla of me,  
“ in unvarnished language, that I seized the camels  
“ flaunting over the plains, and that I felled down  
“ the armies on the day of terrors ; say that I was  
“ marching away with the property and the beau-  
“ teous camels, when the stern-faced horsemen of  
“ Sakhm forced them from me. My steed hurled  
“ me on the battle field, and betrayed me, and sub-  
“ jected me to the thrusts of every shield-armed  
“ hero. Then I retired as a hostage, in chains : and  
“ I have merited them ; and I moved along in them,  
“ like one overwhelmed with confusion. Had it not  
“ been for the assault of the lion among them, and  
“ their cry to me—Aid us, O Antar ! when I met  
“ him, fettered as I was—they never would have  
“ acknowledged that I was the slayer of armies.  
“ When the furious beast flew at me, I feared not.  
“ My sword cleaved the body of the lion, and I  
“ forced it out through his thighs in an instant, and  
“ I wiped it on his skin. They cast me indeed into



“ a sea of deaths, anxious for my destruction ; but I  
“ tumbled him down like one precipitated from a  
“ mountain’s height.”

We have told King Monzar, said the attendant  
as he entered Antar’s prison ; he now demands you,  
in order to hear your proposal. Antar arose, and  
went with them into the presence of the King, who  
ordered the fetters to be taken off from his feet, and  
the cords to be cut that bound his hands. Then he  
sighed, and thus spoke.

“ May God forgive me that my soul is hardened,  
“ for my uncle beguiled me and exposed me to perils,  
“ and in his vile artifices has cast me into an abyss  
“ of fire, whose flames encompass me. I am become  
“ tortured of heart, fettered, my fingers and hands  
“ bound round my neck. Few are there like me in the  
“ day of the wood-entangled spears, when heroes con-  
“ tend in the fierce charge: O King of the world, thy  
“ sea is expansive as the glittering sword among men  
“ and dæmons. When the warriors charge—then ex-  
“ pose me to them, and try my assault—my battle  
“ among them. Be thou victorious, with Antar’s aid,  
“ and convert, my lord, thy fears into security. Pro-  
“ tect but my rear with a thousand lion heroes, and  
“ thou shalt view the wonders of my sword and my  
“ spear. Thou shalt see a lion driving away the horse-  
“ men with a scimitar that surpasses the lightning’s  
“ flash in brilliancy. Grant me the dower for my



“ beloved Ibla, of the thousand camels, that have ex-  
“ cited me to this enterprise. O Ibla, fear not the foe  
“ on my account, when they crowd about me, and  
“ the war horses charge ; for death is but my own  
“ form—my own qualities, and there is no pro-  
“ sperity but what is attached to my bridle. I am  
“ the youth that fells the horsemen in my strength  
“ —a youth whose equal exists not on earth. O  
“ breezes ! I implore ye by the pillars at Mecca, by  
“ Zemzem—by the sacred plains and Mesdelifa\*,—  
“ when ye pass the land of Shurebah, waft my  
“ salutation to Zoheir and his royal sons, and say  
“ to the sorrowing Shiboob, hast thou forgotten  
“ my faith—renounced my vows ? for thou art my  
“ foster brother, my stay, my support when my  
“ friends betray me and persecute me—O Shiboob,  
“ haste then, my brother, haste that thou mayst see  
“ what I have suffered, and what has befallen me  
“ —that thou mayst see a battle that will make  
“ thee forget the past, and that thou mayst see,  
“ O Shiboob, the boundless height of my glory.  
“ For my ambition soars above the Pleiades, and  
“ my fortunate star sparkles with brilliant rays.”

The King was again surprised at Antar's bursts of poetry and strength of mind ; and he was convinced of victory with his sword and spear. O Absian, said he, what is this I have heard of you to-day, when you heard the shouts and the attack of

\* A place near Mecca.



the enemy? Truly, my lord, replied Antar, my gall was nearly bursting when I heard that you had been obliged to fly from these caldrons of dogs: this disgrace can never be erased from the Arabs. What can men do, said Monzar, when double their numbers attack them? and they are overwhelmed by those who do not fear their carnage? Man, said Antar, must patiently resist, and drink of the cup of death as he drinks the purest water, and not fly or run away. I am now in your power, and I demand of you the marriage dower of Ibla, my uncle's daughter; restore me my sword, my cuirass, my arms, and my horse, and give me a thousand men to defend my rear; and you shall see what my courage and force will effect against your foes.

By the virtue of the Caaba, said Monzar, O Absian, if you perform what you state, and destroy this army—all my property, my he and she camels are all at your disposal. Not one of us shall remain behind the tent wall, but we will exert our utmost energies against the foe, and we will strike with our swords, and thrust with our spears. And he ordered his horse and his arms and his cuirass to be restored. And early on the morrow, a loud shout arose from amongst the Persians, eager to plunder the property, and capture the women and the children: but the Arabs went forth against them, and at their head was Antar, the hero of conquest; and he cried out—Your hopes have failed, you caldron



of dogs, you shall this day see Antar perform what nations shall record. Then he cried, O by thy eyes, O Ibla, and thus repeated:

“ On the day of battle exquisite is the carnage.—  
“ Come forth then against me, ye men of abomina-  
“ tion—in me ye shall meet a Knight whose blow  
“ strikes life dead. I am the Antar of horsemen in  
“ the contest, that makes armies and warriors drink  
“ of ignominy, a draught from his hand with the  
“ polished sword that glides through the neck, in  
“ the battle field. Soon will I plunge into the war  
“ dust till I encounter Khosrewan, and make him  
“ drink of the cup of death: I will make him taste  
“ from my sword a draught, after which he shall  
“ never taste of pure water. Ye shall see the horse  
“ scattered over the wastes—the Himyarite chiefs  
“ shall be bound on their saddles. I am the lion,  
“ foremost in war, and mine arm is the horror of  
“ warriors. Mine is honour and good fortune and  
“ glory, and my star is high above the brilliant  
“ Arcturus.”

He then received the attack of the horse as the parched up ground the first of the rain; and his thrusts were the thrusts that blinded vision, and equalled fate and destiny. He overthrew heroes and destroyed warriors, and in an hour blood was flowing and streaming, and bowels were ripped open. When the Persians observed these dreadful deeds, they advanced from all quarters. The voice of



Antar was like the thunder's peal, and his thrusts more rapid than the flash of the lightning ; and the Arab warriors, encouraged at his steadiness, felt convinced of victory after defeat ; but as soon as the Persians saw these descending misfortunes, their hearts regretted what had passed, and the land and the region appeared too confined for them. The whole country was blackened in their eyes ; their avidity was frustrated in the capture of the sons and daughters.

Affairs continued in this position till mid-day, and they toiled in the battle fiercer than a blaze of fire. And when the heat oppressed the warriors, the Persians gave way, and sought refuge in their tents, and gave a loose to their despair. Many were the horses deprived of their riders. Their chief, Khosrewan, stood under the standards, and the delay seemed tedious, for he was expecting that his companions would return with the captives and the spoil ; when, lo ! they indeed returned, but in flight. O my lord, they cried, in reply to his questions, the Arabs have vanquished us—we have seen a prodigy among them—and if you do not come down upon that chosen horseman, not a head or tail of us will survive ; for he fails not where he aims ; he succeeds in all he undertakes ; and if he attacks a whole troop, he disperses it ; if he assaults a horseman, he overthrows him, and his voice is like the crash of thunder ; the moment a man



hears it, a universal ague seizes him; he is like a lion when he assaults, and he drives away the warriors before him like a flock of sheep.

As Khosrewan heard this he was greatly enraged, and fire flashed from his eyes. Whence comes this horseman, he exclaimed, to this country? and to what Arabs is he related? Then starting from beneath the standards he sought the place of slaughter, and the scene of attack. In his hand he bore a long mace, with which he assailed the troops; he dived through the dust, and the heroes trembled at his mace, as the dust rolled over his horse.

Now Monzar was directing his sons to move beyond the precincts of Hirah, when the form of victory and triumph appeared to him in the odour of that black lion. He sat down in his tent, and seated Antar by him, for he was dearer to him than all his family and relations; he congratulated him, and gave him to eat, and there was no end to his attentions and kindness; and as he engaged to him every favour, he said, If I knew your heart would be gratified by remaining with me, I would send a messenger to your King, and would offer him my friendship, and I would direct him to take Ibla from her father, and send her to us, whether he will or not. But I fear you will not allow me to do what your heart would not sanction.



I cannot possibly remain here, replied Antar; every day appears a thousand years to me; but I swear by all your munificence towards me, were even my heart to burst with the fierceness of my love and passion, I will not quit this country till I have accomplished your wishes in destroying your foul enemies: to-morrow, by the grace of God, I will rout their army. To-morrow I will go out to the field of battle: I will challenge Khosrewan, and I will invite him to terminate the affair; and if he engages me, I will make him drink of the cup of death; and afterwards I will put to flight these troops of horse over the plains and the deserts. When they had finished eating and drinking, and their conversation about the battle and the contest, they retired to rest and sleep. As soon as the morning dawned with a smile, the horsemen rushed on, anxious for the fight and the conflict; and as Khosrewan was preparing to proceed to the field, lo! from the Arab army there came forth a man between the two ranks, and stood conspicuous amidst the two armies, and both parties gazed at him. He was like a strong battlement, immersed in steel; in his hand was a sparkling blade; he had a long spear slung over him, and under him was a steed of the colour of gold, indefatigable in labour, as an Arab poet has described.

“Praise a yellow steed of the colour of gold, for  
“he is of the horses noblest in pedigree; his rider



“ shall outstrip every warrior in the beauty of his  
“ shape and paces. He may be in the evening at  
“ Tekmet, and in the morning at Aleppo.”

And he galloped over the plain to and fro, and he disclosed a countenance like that of a Ghoul; the warriors and heroes marked him: and lo! it was the illustrious chieftain and intrepid warrior, Aboolfawaris, Antar, the son of Shedad; and he came forth to put an end to the Persian contest, and to slay their general; and thus return to his family and country with wealth and riches. He dashed into the centre of the army; he disdained the common herd, and would not condescend to challenge them. He burst on the right, and discomfited it; and slew threescore and ten—he rushed on to the left, and forced it in confusion on the right; he returned again to the centre, seeking carnage and bloodshed. He was mounted on a mare, for his horse Abjer, wounded the day before, was still unfit for the day of encounter. And when he was in the centre between the two armies, he thus spoke:

“ Relieve my pains—ease my sorrows. Sally  
“ forth, ay, every lion warrior. Taste a draught  
“ at the edge of my sword, more bitter than the  
“ cups of Absynth. When death appears in the  
“ crowded ranks, then challenge me to the meet-  
“ ing of armies. Ye Persians, I heed ye not, I  
“ heed ye not. Where is he who wishes to fight



“ me, and wants to make me drink the liquor of  
“ death? Bring him forth; let him see what he will  
“ meet from my spear under the shades of the war-  
“ dust. I swear, O Ibla, he shall eat of death. By  
“ thy teeth, luscious to the kiss, and by thine eyes,  
“ and all the pangs of their enchantment, and their  
“ beauty, were thy nightly visionary form not to  
“ appear to me, never should I taste of sleep. O  
“ thou my hope! O may the western breeze tell  
“ thee of my ardent wish to return home! May  
“ it waft thee my salutation, when the spark-  
“ ling dawn bursts the veil of night! May God  
“ moisten thy nights, and bedew thee with his  
“ rain-charged clouds! May peace dwell with thee  
“ as long as the western and northern breeze shall  
“ blow!”

When Antar had finished—behold Khosrewan—he appeared on the plain, and he was mounted on a long-tailed steed, marked with the new moon on his forehead, and on his body was a strong coat of mail well knit together, the workmanship of David; and armed with an imperial casque and a glittering sword; and under his thighs were four small darts, each like a blazing flame. And when he came forth on the field of battle he roared aloud, and contemptuously of the Arabs. Antar assailed him: high arose the dust about them, so that they were hid from the sight. They exhibited most extraordinary prowess: they separated—they clung to each



other ; now they sported, now they were in earnest ; they gave and took—they were close, they were apart, until it was mid-day, and both had severely toiled. But whenever Khosrewan attempted to assail Antar and strike him with his mace, he ever found him vigilant and on his guard, and aware of his intent. So he darted away from him in order to gallop over the field, and would exhibit all his manœuvres and stratagems ; but Antar kept him employed, and wearied him, and prevented his executing his designs, so that the chieftain's wrath became intense. He snatched up one of his darts, and shook it and hurled it at him—it flew from his hand like the blinding lightning or descending fate. Antar stood firm, and when it came near him, he met it, and dexterously turning it off by his shield, it bounded away, and fell upon the ground far off. Khosrewan snatched out a second dart, and levelled it at him ; but Antar sprang out of its way, and it passed harmless. He aimed a third, but Antar rendered it fruitless by his dexterity and his persevering activity. He hurled the fourth, but it shared the same fate as the others.

When Khosrewan saw how Antar had parried the darts, his indignation was extreme. Again he took up his mace, and he roared even as a lion roars—then stretching himself out with it, he hurled it, backing it with a howl that made the plains and the air rebellow. Antar threw away his spear, and met



the mace, and caught it with his right hand in the air; then, aiming it at Khosrewan, he cried out, Take that, thou son of a two thousand horned cuckold! I am the lover of Ibla, and am alone—the Phoenix of the world. Khosrewan saw him grasp the mace in the air, and was horrified, for his strength and force were exhausted. He retreated, and attempted to fly from his antagonist, for he was now convinced of his destruction. He moved round his shield between his shoulders; but he felt that his fate was nigh at hand, for the mace fell upon his shield more forcibly than the stone of a sling; furiously it rattled on the Persian chief, and hurled him off his saddle to the distance of twelve cubits, and broke his ribs and snapped his spine.

Every warrior was intensely agitated at this surprising deed; and when the Persians saw it, they were bewildered; they rushed upon Antar, agonized as they were at this calamity, and exposed their lives to certain death. The Arabs received them with undaunted courage at the points of their spears; and their spirit was exhilarated by the acts of Antar. The two armies assailed, and the earth was pounded under the trampling of the horses. The horsemen and the clans encountered—clouds of dust thickened over their heads: and their fury increased, till they were like the waves of the boisterous ocean. Spears penetrated through hearts and waists, heads were flying off, blood was boiling,



cowards were scared, the courageous full of fire; the King of Death circled round the cup of mortality; and the commands of the Most High were executed upon them\*.

Antar, the ferocious lion, felt his heart assuaged in the midst of slaughter, and in the concussion of heroes and warriors. He exhibited terrors amidst the concourse of heroes, and scattered whole armies over the plains and the mountains. King Monzar cried out aloud to his troops, and they exposed themselves to the enemy: roused afresh was the flame of war; it fiercely raged, and its sparks flashed; the dust blackened the whole land, so that both earth and heaven were veiled. The ground tottered under the hoofs of the noble steeds, until the sweat even moistened their entrails. Blood flowed from the throats of the chiefs. Antar strewed the brave on the earth, and souls complained of their sufferings to him who knows the secrets of the world. Heads were hewn from the branches of their bodies; and the Persians saw in the deeds of Antar that day what terrified them, and magnified their horror. They fell back in flight upon the plains in agony at their dispersion and discomfiture, and complaining of what had befallen their nobles and their chiefs. The Arabs in their rear drove them on to their fate, and truly their desires and wishes were accomplished. As they exulted in the

\* Διος δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.



realization of their hopes and expectations, they crowded round Antar to thank and praise him, and he stood before them like one immersed in a sea of blood. Then, as he recollected the horrors he had suffered, these verses boiled in his heart, and he thus exclaimed :—

“ Ask, O Absian maid, my spear and my sword  
“ what they did on the day of the battle of the Per-  
“ sians. I steeped them, whilst the spear gored  
“ through the horse, in the blood of the foe mixed  
“ with bitter Absynth. I dispersed the army that  
“ bellowed out their thunders, and beneath it flashed  
“ the lightning of their swords, mounted as I was  
“ on a noble Arab charger, that flies when the  
“ sword blades crash in the fight ; he neighs for joy  
“ whilst the spears are directed at him, that vibrate  
“ like speckled serpents. I urged him into the sea  
“ of deaths ; he snorted, and plunged into the tem-  
“ pestuously roaring waves. How many horsemen,  
“ O Ibla, at the edge of my falchion have torn  
“ their hands with their teeth in repentance ! but I  
“ felled them down on the battle plain, that the  
“ wild beasts and eagles and hovering vultures  
“ might drink of their blood. I must love the tribe  
“ of Abs, were they even to shed my blood unre-  
“ venged,—such is my love for thee, thou daughter  
“ of noble chiefs ! I will endure the burthen of  
“ grievances, and sorrows, and captivity, and show  
“ that I am a warrior and the son of a warrior.



“ May the peace of God be with thee, O Ibla—soon  
“ will I come to thee with my trophies !”

Antar having finished these verses, the chiefs and the warriors were astonished at his eloquence, and they repaired with the spoil and plunder to the presence of King Monzar, who started up to meet Antar, kissed him between the eyes, and could only congratulate him on his safety, for he was confounded at such instances of his bravery. Horseman of the day, he cried, protector of Abs and Adnan ! all that the Persians have left this day be thine, O Knight of the time and age ! for thou hast earned it by thy sword and thy spear. Thou hast brought peace and comfort to the Arabs. Let this plunder be a grant from me to thee, together with the Asafeer camels ; and moreover, out of mine own will I bestow immense wealth on thee ; but I cannot permit thee to wed the daughter of thy uncle any where but here with me in this land, and I will fulfil all thy wishes and thy desires ; for I am resolved to send letters to the tribes, and to assemble the hordes from the waters and the springs, and make ready for war against the just King.

O my lord, expel that thought from your mind, cried Antar, for by the life of the eyes of Ibla, to me the strongest of oaths, I alone will stand thee in stead of the whole race of Arabs—never will I cease from the blows of my Indian sword till I have not left in your presence one of your enemies alive,



not a cuckold of them. Moreover, it is my intention to put you in possession of the throne of Nushirvan. Monzar expressed his thanks, for he knew he could perform what he promised, from what he had observed of his intrepidity in the black rolling dust.

Thus they entered Hirah, and rejoiced in their victory and triumph ; and Antar went to the habitation that was prepared for him. Monzar retired to rest; but he was greatly disquieted, and feared Chosroe and his stratagems.



## CHAPTER VI.

ON the next day when Monzar was seated on the throne of his kingdom, and the horsemen of his clan were around him, they consulted and deliberated, and they were unanimous that the Arabs should be written to, and precautions be taken against Nushirvan. And when they had come to this resolution, an attendant entered, and kissing the ground, said—O King, excellent tidings for you in the arrival of your Vizier Amroo, the son of Nefeela! Now this Vizier was one of the oldest men of the age, for he was four hundred years old; he was well versed in history, and acquainted with every event, and he was one of the wise men who had predicted the mission of Mohammed, the seal of Prophets and delegates; and he generally resided at Mecca, expecting his appearance, that he might be directed by his light.

When Monzar heard of his arrival, he was rejoiced and delighted at the good news. In a short time he presented himself, and saluted him. Monzar sprang up to meet him, congratulated him, and saluted him. O Chief, said he, you are come just at the very moment you are required, for I am overwhelmed with anxiety; and for its removal I depend



first on God, and then on you. I am quite disconsolate at the state of my affairs, and I have repented of what I have done, and I wish for you, O Vizier, to bear some of my burthens.

And when he had informed him of all that had passed between him and Chosroe—You have indeed acted wrong, O King, said Amroo, in this business; verily as soon as I heard the news, I came as fast as I could from the land of Mecca and the sacred shrine, fearful lest your country should be laid waste, and the Arab chiefs destroyed by the hands of the worshippers of fire, and you would be thus involved in disgrace and in misery. Indeed I have recommended to you a thousand times not to make the fire-worshippers your enemies, until you should hear that Mecca is illuminated with the light and appearance of the chosen Prophet to be sent from Adnan, for then will the temples of fire be extinguished, and the palace be rent: but now you have only to bend to error, and take care to obey the orders of this monarch, even should he outrage you. For you have slain his satrap and cut up his horsemen; so beware of his deceits. Moderation is now most advisable: renounce writing to the Arabs, but have patience till I go to Modayin, and observe its inhabitants, and mark the state of affairs. I will visit their minister, Mubidan, and request him to give up this point, and direct him to avert from us the ill-will of Nushirvan.



Your advice is most judicious, said Monzar : act, O Vizier, as it seems fit to you ; I will oppose nothing you say. So Amroo went to repose himself; and then Monzar reported to him the deeds of Antar, how he had slain Khosrewan, and destroyed an army of twenty thousand horse, and had given victory to the Arab warriors after their defeat and flight. The Vizier was astonished at Antar's acts and intrepidity, so superior were they to any thing hitherto known in deserts or towns.

On the third day the Vizier Amroo mounted his horse and repaired to Modayin, having first recommended Monzar to treat Antar with attention and kindness, and to prevent him from returning to his own country. He traversed the deserts and cultivated places till he reached Modayin, when he presented himself to Mubidan, the Cazi of the worshippers of fire, without ceremony and without permission. Mubidan rose up in haste to meet him, and received him with the highest honour and distinction : he made him sit by him, and spoke to him in the most friendly manner, saying,—What has induced you to visit me ? What has made you trouble yourself about me ? I was not at hand when these events took place, said the Vizier, and I was not present at these occurrences : I was at Mecca, and in those parts ; but as soon as the news reached me, and I heard how King Monzar had eaten the dates with the stones, I was convinced that troubles



would arise between them. I came at full speed, for I feared some great disaster, and I wished to settle the business ere I died. But I did not arrive till all was over ; so I have hurried to you, in order to arrange matters, fearing that these human considerations would bring about unnecessarily disagreeable consequences. Therefore, O Chief, be benevolent as long as kindness is in your power, and be not revengeful on account of a difference in religion.

Mubidan was pleased from his heart, and the flame of his anger was extinguished. O Amroo, said he, before you arrived, I had resolved to arrange this business : the army has returned routed, and its chief has been slain ; but I have not reported this circumstance to the just King, fearful that blood would be shed, and men be slaughtered. I have also my anxiety about events which have lately occurred, and I wish to relieve the heart of the King of some of his burthens ; for governments sicken as men sicken, and they have no other physician but their Viziers ; and these are acquainted with the evils and the remedies.

What is it, cried Amroo, that has troubled the heart of the just King ; for he is the ruler of all the tribes ! You know that the emperor of Greece, answered Mubidan, has always been accustomed to send to Chosroe a vast quantity of goods, and precious stones, and metals and jewels, and male and female European slaves, and other objects ; in short,



that the tongue fails in describing. At this present time a Grecian chief is come with the treasure, and in his suite are five hundred horsemen of his nation, and ten priests, and five monks: he presented himself before Chosroe in his palace, and spoke to him by an interpreter, saying—O mighty King, I am indeed come with the wealth and jewels and rich presents, such as fire cannot consume, and beautiful virgins and slaves; but I must make one stipulation with you, viz. that I will not deliver them to you, unless you have a horseman that can vanquish me in the field of battle.

Now the cause of the arrival of this Chief, continued Mubidan, and of his appearance before Chosroe, was this extraordinary circumstance.—He had quitted the Isles of the Sea, in order to visit the holy shrine at Jerusalem, and the fountain of peace; and when his pilgrimage was terminated, he heard a good report of the cities of Syria, so he repaired thither, and resided there some time; and one day being in the presence of Harith, in the course, he exhibited his horsemanship and intrepidity, far superior to the other horsemen. Harith having remarked his extraordinary prowess, sent for him and presented him with a robe, and exalted him in rank above the nobles of his court, accommodated him in a house suitable to his station, and supplied him with provisions.

And Harith for a long time engaged him against



the warriors, and he overcame every antagonist in force and ability, and in course of time he conquered all the armies of Syria, who acknowledged his intrepidity and superiority, and yielded to him the highest honours, so that Harith greatly rejoiced in him ; and he said, this is indeed the sword of Jesus ; and he resolved to present him to the Roman Emperor. So he wrote to the Emperor, and mentioned what feats this Chief had performed. Keep him with you, said he in his letter, and prevent his returning to the Isles of the Sea, in order that you may obtain, through him, what you wish and desire from the Arabs and the worshippers of fire ; and he sent his letter by a messenger.

On the next day Harith despatched the Chief with a party of his attendants to wait on the Emperor. The messenger travelled with the letter till he reached Antioch, and being admitted to the presence, he delivered him the letter, which he took and read, and having understood its secret meaning, was rejoiced in the Chief. He even went out to meet him with all the nobles of his court and ministers of the kingdom. So when the Chief reached the suburbs, he was greatly surprised, as were all his companions, for he thought this meeting of the Emperor was accidental, not being aware of the letter Harith had sent forward. The Chief dismounted, and crossing his face before he spoke, kissed the earth in the presence of the Emperor, who, much



surprised at the courtesy of his manners, desired him to remount his horse, and taking him by his side, they all returned together to Antioch, every one gazing on the Chief, and astonished at his gigantic shape and stature, till they arrived at the city, when all their anxiety and trouble being at an end, every one returned home. And there being no one present, the Emperor sat down, and made the Chief do so likewise by his side, and invited him to tell his adventures, and offered him riches and possessions.

O most beneficent monarch, said the Chief, I left not my country in search of wealth, but the reason of my departure was to seek the reward of virtue and meritorious acts. I have reached your presence, and my wish is to exhibit my prowess before the inhabitants of this land, that I may attain the object of my desires. The Emperor showed the warrior every possible attention.

Now the name of this Chief was Badhramoot: he remained three days as the Emperor's guest; on the third he appeared on the plain, and the horsemen came out against him; but they retreated from before him in shame and disgrace, and he remained galloping about like a dæmon. For three days he continually exhibited himself on the course, till he had marked all the troops of the Emperor in the combat; and when the Emperor perceived his superior skill, he was much surprised, and wished to detain



him with him, that he might, through him, be victorious over his enemies; and amongst other things he thought of marrying him to his daughter, and of sharing with him his dominions.

One day Badhramoot came to the Emperor, and found him sitting down, and all his treasures before him: he was selecting the best metals and jewels, and was putting them in cups, and was sealing them up, and was packing them up in boxes, and was preparing them for a long journey by land. Badhramoot was much agitated and surprised at this. To whom do you intend sending this treasure? he asked. To Chosroe Nushirvan, the lord of the crown and palace, replied the Emperor, for he is the King of Persia and Deelem, and the ruler of nations. O monarch, this King, is he not of the religion of Jesus, the son of Mary? the chief asked. He is the great King, he replied, and he worships fire; and he has armies and allies whose numbers are incalculable, and on this account I send him tribute, and keep him away from my own country.

At these words the light became darkness in Badhramoot's eyes. By your existence, O King, said he, I cannot allow any one to adore aught but the Messiah in this world. We must wage a sacred war, and have a crusade against the inhabitants of that land and those cities. How can you submit to this digrace and indignity, and humble yourself



to a worshipper of fire ; you, who are the Emperor of the religion of the Cross, and the Priest's gown ? I swear by him \* who withdrew a dead body from the earth, and breathed into clay, and there came forth birds and beasts, I will not permit you to send these goods and presents, unless I go also against those people, and fight them with the sword's edge. I will engage the armies of Chosroe, and exert my strength against them : if I am slain, then you may stand to your covenant.

Rid us of this affair, exclaimed the Emperor ; avert and withdraw from us the supremacy of Chosroe and his armies ; but do not open upon us a gate which we shall not be able to close : and if you wish to make a journey to the land of the King, go with these presents, and when you are in his presence, tell him your own story,—examine the extent of his dominion, and his horsemen, and the number of his troops, and his allies. Ask him to let you fight his bold warriors—whatever you desire, he will grant you ; and when you have engaged the horsemen and succeeded in your attempt, then inform me, that I may show you what I can do : but if you find that his power is too great, conjure him to spare this land and realm.

Badhramoot agreed to this proposal, and he departed with the presents, and he arrived at Modayin, his heart free from fear. He went to Chosroe and presented his letter, and said through an interpreter,

\* Jesus Christ.



O most glorious King, you know that Kings will not submit to tribute until they have been vanquished in battle. I am now come with all this property as presents to you ; but I wish to avert this disgrace from the Christians, and I will engage your warriors in your presence. If they slay me in the combat, my blood is rightfully yours ; but if I am superior to all your heroes and combatants, then relieve us from tribute, and do not expose mankind to difficulties and hardships ; for in all religions it is tyranny and oppression to shed blood.

All this being interpreted to Chosroe, his anger and indignation, though considerably excited, were softened by the mildness of the Chieftain's representations. He pondered the subject some time, and then, being convinced that he had only made a reasonable demand, he turned towards his satraps and said—Take this Chieftain, and conduct him to a mansion suitable to his rank, with his suite, and provide them with every thing to eat and drink, that we may comply with his requests : let the property be left with him, that we may likewise fulfil his intention : to-morrow we will go to the plain to view the combat of the horsemen, and we will not receive the presents but on his terms.

Accordingly the satraps conducted the Chief and his suite to a spacious mansion, and left all the property with them. The next day the armies mounted and repaired to the plain, and all being assembled, Chosroe mounted his horse, surrounded



by the standards and ensigns ; and when the two parties were drawn up, the Chief came forward like a huge camel, his priests and monks attending him ; he urged on his horse into the field of contention, and the brave heroes were rushing upon him from all sides ; but Chosroe issued orders to his people that they should draw lots, and thus proceed in rotation against him, and whoever should conquer him should receive all the presents he brought with him.

When the combatants heard this, they retired from the scene of combat and drew lots, and the lot fell upon the first of the generals named Shirkan, son of Tirkan. He sallied out against the Chief ; but the Grecian warrior waiting till he came close to him, drew his foot out of his stirrup, struck him on the breast with his foot, and hurled him on the ground. The whole body of horsemen were confounded, and their limbs trembled within them. Again they drew lots, and the lot fell upon a sturdy warrior, one of the worshippers of fire : he fought with various arms, and he was indefatigable in the combat : he rushed at him, armed with a mace, roaring like a lion : he opened wide his arm as he came near to him, and endeavoured to strike him, and knock him down ; but the Chief struck him with the butt-end of his spear, and dashed him to the earth : he had already drawn out the barb from his spear ; and there was not a combatant that



came forward but he stretched him on the ground ; and before the close of the day he had vanquished a hundred valiant warriors. Then Chosroe sent for him, and received him kindly, and gave him a robe. By the burning of fire and its flames, said he, you have earned all this property from these vile miscreants.

Chosroe then returned, and he was greatly enraged with his own troops : but the Chieftain was rejoiced, and he reposed that night in security. The next day he returned to the contest, and Nushirvan also mounted his horse, and the combat was the same as the first day ; and the Grecian quitted not the scene of action till he had overcome more than a hundred warriors, many with their ribs broken, suffering the pangs of death and perdition. And Chosroe was exceedingly wroth with his troops.

Thus continued the Chief to engage the heroes of Persia for fifteen days, and he excelled them all ; and the armies of Chosroe were disgraced. In affliction he passed the night, and he rose up to grief and gloom. Matters were in this situation, when lo ! Mubidan entered. O Vizier, cried Chosroe, watch over us in this important affair : behold what is befalling us with respect to this experienced Greek, for verily he will tear our empire in pieces with his intrepidity ; and we are unable to rid ourselves of his power. I wish to write to Khosrewan, to come to us with his horsemen against this Grecian devil.



Refrain from such expressions, O King, said Mubidan, for you may still accomplish your wish, and degrade and hold in contempt this Chieftain, and the affair terminate to your glory and success. How can that be? said the King, and what do you propose? My opinion is, said he, that you write to your lieutenant, King Monzar, the ruler of the Arabs, under whose command are all the tribes, and order him to send you a few of his slaves, and they will subjugate for you this obstinate Chief, and will accomplish what you covet and desire; for the Arab horsemen are the horsemen of victory and conquest; they only are brought up in plains and rocks, in battle and slaughter: in such emergencies the horsemen of Hijaz are most renowned; but our horsemen, O King of the world, are only famed for magnificent entertainments.

The King laughed, and said—How can this be brought about, Mubidan? Monzar is irritated against us by what has happened between me and him, owing to the satrap Khosrewan, who is now gone against him with his troops and forces, and I have no intelligence of him. Live for ever, O King of the world, said Mubidan; but for your Satrap, the fire has received his soul, and its smoke and its flames have consumed him. His army is returning, routed and beaten. I have kept this circumstance a secret from you, but now the fire has made me think it proper to disclose it to you.



O Vizier, said Chosroe, greatly distressed—in this extremity, what is your plan? how can I possibly send to Monzar, now that he has rent in pieces my honour, and slain a satrap of my government?

O King, said the Vizier, the honour of your Empire is in his hands—he alone can save it; for he possesses a warrior of the race of Adnan, who would encounter every horseman and hero you possess. Then informing him of all that concerned Antar from beginning to end—It would, in my opinion, be right, added he, to send to King Monzar a robe and presents, and direct him to produce before you this lion horseman, for he will surely destroy yon Chief, and will remove this distress and affliction from your heart. But, said Chosroe, I fear Monzar will not obey my orders, and he will suppose that dismay has stricken us.

Be assured, O great King, said Mubidan, that Monzar is terrified at your wrath and your vengeance, and just now his Vizier Amroo, the son of Nefeelah, came to me, and asked me to intercede with you, and request you would pass over what he has done, and forgive his improper conduct. Well, said Chosroe, do what you think proper; perhaps the difficulty may be removed. Order this horseman into our presence, and promise him, on our part, all manner of riches. So Mubidan departed, and having acquainted the Vizier Amroo with what had occurred on this important point, he desired



him to write to Monzar, and tell him what had passed, ordering him to bring Antar into the presence of the King at Modayin.

The Vizier wrote the letter, as follows—"To him whom we acknowledge as King Monzar, King of the Arabs, Ruler of the tribes Lakhm and Juzam and Shiban! Know, O King, that the business on which I came has been effected, and all your projects are accomplished. Moreover, I have promised Chosroe, the monarch of the world, that Antar shall overcome this Grecian Chief, and shall relieve his heart from his present distress and affliction: come therefore hither without delay, and be there no other answer to this letter but placing your foot in the stirrup." He folded and sealed the letter, and despatched it under the wings of a bird, and they remained expecting the result. But the Chief, as soon as the day dawned, sent some of his people and horsemen to demand of Chosroe permission to go out to the plain, that he might again engage in his presence his armies and his warriors. So Chosroe mounted, and all his people and horsemen also came forth: and the Greek overpowered the heroes of Persia, who combated with him even to the close of the day, when they returned; and the glory and honour of the Persians were tarnished.

The next day the two parties mounted and were drawn up in order; and the Grecian fought, and galloped, and charged, and sought for the combat-



ants and antagonists, when lo ! a horseman from Deelem, Bahram by name, the son of Johram, engaged him, and he was a warrior rapid as a burning flame, and he fought with different sorts of arms, indefatigable in war. He was the son of the uncle of that Khosrewan whom Antar had slain, Antar, the destroyer of horsemen ! On that day he fought on the plain, and he wore a Davidean cuirass,\* solid and firm, that blunted the javelin's point, and in his hand he bore a pike with which he gave the blow of death. He was also girt with a cleaving falchion, and under his thighs were four short javelins. He assaulted the Chief with all his force, and engaged with him in the combat.

Their engagement at first was sport and play, but it ended in impetuosity and fury. They continued their labours and exertions till mid-day, and the Greek having experienced Bahram's might and strength, at length put forth all his powers and energies in the contest ; and the pike of the Chief was without a barb, as he had agreed on in the presence of Chosroe Nushirvan. But he stretched his hand over the pommel of his saddle, and plucked out a barb like the tongue of a serpent, and fastened it on the end of his pike, and rushed upon Bahram in his rage : he extended the barb towards his

\* David was supposed to have been a celebrated armorer. In Turkey every Musulman is brought up to some trade, from the Sultan downwards.



chest, and he gave a loud shout; but Bahram struck it with his sword, and clipped it off. The Greek threw away his pike, and drew forth his sword from the scabbard, and they engaged with their sabres till both were near partaking of the draught of death. Then the ranks closed upon them, and the Deelemites rejoiced in their warrior, and their expectations were raised high. The warriors ceased not the battle and the contest till the end of the day, when they separated unhurt; and neither had marked his adversary. So they retired, and each related to his companions the circumstances of the conflict. Chosroe sent for Bahram, and gave him a robe.

Early next day Chosroe mounted, attended by the Persians, and Turcomans, and Deelemites, drawn up in ranks on the plain of battle. The Grecian Chief came with all his suite, and charged and galloped over the plain. Bahram came down upon him, and they dashed at each other, and charged to and fro, and ranged over the plain, extending their long spears till every eye was sickened: then they commenced the battle, and continued till sunset, when they again separated unhurt. But Chosroe was greatly distressed, and he ordered the Magi to make a circuit of the fire in his presence, and to throw aloof of Comorin into it, praising the unity of the adored King; so they did as he ordered. And



the Chief performed the same ceremony, and his priests and monks recited the Gospel, and marked themselves with the Cross, and both parties reposed in blasphemy and heresy.

The next day at dawn the horsemen were ready for the contest, when lo ! a dust arose and obscured the land ; and there appeared coming forth a hundred horsemen, all sturdy Arabs, armed with long spears and sharp swords, mounted on noble coursers. King Monzar headed them, and by his side was Antar. The Vizier and Mubidan went out to meet them with a party of satraps and horsemen, and the troops on all sides crowded to look at them. Mubidan related to Antar all that had passed between the Grecian and Bahram.

O Vizier, said the lion Antar, assure the just King, whose beneficence and liberality are well known, that I will encounter this Grecian, and Bahram, and all the warriors of Persia, Turkistan, and Deelem, and will not leave a man in Modayin. Mubidan smiled, for he was convinced he could execute what he said, observing the immensity of his bulk, and the horror of his form, and the rolling of his eyes, and the muscular powers of his arms.

O Horseman of the age, said he, should you not execute your engagement, and not slay this hero of the Cross ?—If I do not fulfil my agreement, cried



Antar, drag me by my feet through the temple of fire, and make a sacrifice of me. Mubidan smiled, and he introduced him to the officers of Government who wore golden bracelets on their arms, and afterwards to those who wore crowns on their heads. King Monzar dismounted, and all his horsemen, and then entered the apartments of the Nobles, and the Viziers and Satraps, and Grandees, and Dignitaries. Antar was in amazement at what he saw, and the people also stared and gazed at him; and this continued till they came before Chosroe. Monzar stepped forward and saluted him, and prayed for a continuance of his glory and power. Then Antar too paid his homage, and thus spoke:

“ May God avert from thee the evils of fortune,  
“ and mayst thou live secure from calamities ! May  
“ thy star be ever brilliant in progressive pro-  
“ sperity, and increase in glory ! May thy sword be  
“ ever sharp, and cleave the necks of thy foes, O  
“ thou King of the age ! May thy renown be ever  
“ celebrated in every land, for thou art just and  
“ beneficent. So mayst thou ever live a Sovereign  
“ in glory, as long as the dove pours forth its  
“ plaintive note.”

Chosroe was astonished at Antar's eloquence, and was confounded at the height of his person, and his prodigious form, and the rolling of his eyes, and the strength of his arms. O King of the world, said



Mubidan, this is he who has slain your satrap Khosrewan, and destroyed his army of twenty thousand bridles, and he is come now take away the life of this Greek, and to remove every grief and sorrow from your heart, and no doubt he will slay all that are with him. Should this be the case, said the Monarch, we will pardon his fault, and ennoble him with gifts. Let them repose: treat them with all kindness and hospitality. And he sent for King Monzar, and gave him a robe. O King of the Arabs, said he, the error was mine at first, and his who raised this rebellion amongst you; but the fire has destroyed him in your presence. The heart of Monzar was delighted at these words, and his joy was great.

And when Mubidan wished to pitch tents for them, that they might repose till the next day—By the Holy Shrine, exclaimed Antar, I will not eat meat with you, or drink wine with you, until I have slain this foul-raced Greek, and made him drink the cup of death; for he has moved the heart of the just King. So he prepared his arms and his cuirass, and sprang from the ground on the back of his horse. Mubidan informed Chosroe of what Antar had said, and he went forth with all his Viziers, Satraps, Princes, and Deputies, to see the result of the combat between the two warriors.

Mubidan also repaired to the Grecian Chief, and



said—Know that Chosroe has in his justice acted towards you with the greatest impartiality, and he has loaded you with favours, and he has only found amongst his people Bahram, that can contend with you ; and the King observes even his inferiority. But as he does not wish that his reputation should be lost, his Vicegerent over the Arabs is arrived this day, and with him a warrior, selected from the heroes of Arabia, who says he will meet you, and make your companions and comrades groan for you. So prepare ; and if you kill him or overcome him, return to your master with all the property you have brought with you.

Badhramoot was overjoyed at this ; his bosom swelled, and he was in ecstasy, and he said—Let Chosroe order out this angry horseman—this day will I haste against him, and make him drink the cup of disgrace. And Mubidan added—Let the persons of your faith bear witness for you. Antar understood not what they were saying—Prepare for battle, he cried ; and immediately the Greek let go the bridle, and assailed Antar the son of Shedad. Antar was like a furious lion, as he thus spoke :

“ This day I will aid King Monzar, and I will  
“ exhibit my powers and my prowess before Chos-  
“ roe ; I will break down the support of Greece  
“ from its foundations, and I will sever Badhra-  
“ moot’s head with my scimitar. I will exterminate



“ every lion hero with my sword : let him vaunt,  
“ let him boast, let him scoff. Is it not known that  
“ my power is sublime on high ?—Is it not among  
“ the stars in the vicinity of Jupiter ? I am he  
“ whose might is uncontrollable in battle. I am  
“ of the race of Abs, the valiant lion of the cavern.  
“ If thou art Badhramoot, I am called Antar among  
“ men. It was easy for me to vanquish the armies  
“ of Chosroe in the contest, and soon will I over-  
“ throw Cæsar’s self with my spear. Hear the  
“ words of an intrepid lion, resolute, undaunted,  
“ all-conquering. I am he of whom warriors can  
“ bear witness in the combat under the turbid bat-  
“ tle-dust. My sword is my companion in the  
“ night-shades, as are also my Abjer, and my  
“ lance and my spear in the conflicts. Night is  
“ my complexion, but day is my emblem ; the sun  
“ is unquestionably the mirror of my deeds. This  
“ day thou shalt feel the truth of what I have said ;  
“ and I will prove that I am the Phoenix of the  
“ age.”

Then Antar rushed down upon the Grecian like a cloud, and the Greek met him like a blazing fire. They engaged like two lions ; they maddened at each other like two camels, and they dashed against each other like two mountains, so that they frightened every eye with their deeds. A dust rose over them that hid them from the sight for



two hours. The Greek perceived in Antar something beyond his capacity, and a sea where there was no rest: he was terrified and agitated, and exclaimed—By the Messiah and his disciples! this biscuit is not of the same leaven—this is the hour of contention; and now is the time for struggle and exertion. So he shouted and roared at Antar, and attacked him with his spike-pointed spear, and dealt him a furious thrust; but Antar eluded it by a dexterous movement, and struck him with the heel of his lance under the arm, and made him totter on the back of his horse; and he almost hurled him on the ground: but Badhramoot with infinite intrepidity sat firm on his horse's back, and galloped to the further part of the plain. Antar waited patiently till he had recovered and his spirit was renewed, when he returned upon him like a ferocious lion, and recommenced the conflict.

King Monzar was highly gratified at the deeds of Antar, and felt convinced that he was only sparing him, and dallying with him, and that had he wished to kill him, he would have done it. But the Monarch was perfectly astonished at Antar's courage; and turning to his attendants, said to them—By the essence of fire, this is indeed horsemanship and intrepidity. Never have I remarked such but in an Arab! And he advanced towards the field of battle that he might observe what passed



between these dreadful combatants, and that he might see how the affair would terminate.

Now Bahram, when he perceived that Antar was superior to himself in strength, and was mightier than the Greek in the conflict, felt assured that he would obtain the promised reward ; so he was seized with the disease of envy, which preyed in flames upon his heart and his body, particularly when he heard that Antar had slain the son of his uncle ; then he resolved to betray Antar, and make him drink of the cup of perdition. So he waited till both were involved in dust, when he drew from under his thigh a dart more deadly than the misfortunes of the age ; and when he came near Antar, he raised his arm and aimed at him the blow of a powerful hero. It started from his hand like a spark of fire ; but Antar was quick of mind, and his eyes were continually turning to the right and to the left, for he was amongst a nation that were not of his own race, and that put him on his guard, and he instantly perceived Bahram as he aimed his dart at him ; and then casting away his spear out of his hand, he caught the dart in the air with his heaven-endowed force and strength, and rushing at the Greek, and shouting at him with a paralysing voice, he struck him with that very dart in the chest, and it issued out quivering like a flame through his back ; then wheeling round Abjer, like a frightful lion he turned down



upon Bahram ; but Chosroe, terrified lest Antar should slay Bahram, cried out to his attendants—Keep off Antar from Bahram, or he will kill him, and pour down annihilation upon him. So the warriors and the satraps hastened after the dreadful Antar, and conducted him to Chosroe ; and as the foam burst from his lips, and his eyeballs flashed fire, he dismounted from Abjer, and thus spoke :

“ May God perpetuate thy glory and happiness,  
“ and mayst thou ever live in eternal bliss ! O  
“ thou King mighty in power, and the source of  
“ justice on every occasion ! I have left Badhra-  
“ moot prostrate on the sands—wallowing in blood.  
“ At the thrust of my spear he fell dead, and his  
“ flesh is the prey of the fowls of the air. I left  
“ the gore spouting out from him like the stream  
“ on the day of the copious rain. I am the  
“ terrible warrior ; renowned is my name, and I  
“ protect my friend from every peril. Should  
“ Cæsar himself oppose thee, O King, and come  
“ against thee with his countless host, I will leave  
“ him dead with his companions. True and un-  
“ varnished is this promise. O King, sublime in  
“ honours—illustrious and happy, thou art now my  
“ firm refuge, and my stay in every crisis. Be  
“ kind then, and grant me leave to go to my family,  
“ and to prepare for my departure : for my anxiety,  
“ and my passion for the noble-minded, brilliant-



“faced Ibla are intense. Hail for ever—be at  
“peace—live in everlasting prosperity, surrounded  
“by joys and pleasures!”

Chosroe again marvelled at his eloquence, and clothed him with an imperial robe, and presented him five Arab horses, with saddles of burnished gold, studded with pearls and jewels. He then addressed Mubidan, and said—Deliver to this warrior all that came with the Greek, whether merchandize or beautiful maidens; and he knew no bounds to his generosity, adding—Bring him to me to-morrow, that I may exalt him with favours, and that I may make him one of our Viceroys of the age. Do ye want any thing further? cried he to the companions of the Greek. Does any one wish for the combat and the conflict? If so, let him hasten to the field of battle.

No more talk we of war and contention, said they all; we only came to this country with the Chief to be witnesses of this event and conflict; and verily, O King of the age, we have experienced every justice from you. So they departed, and turned away their steeds, and traversed the plains and deserts, hardly crediting their escape.

Chosroe repaired to his palace, and Mubidan had charge of Antar's affairs: he conducted him and Monzar to the house of the Greek Chief, where were the treasures and the presents. He opened



all the trunks, and presented to Aboolfawaris all the pearls and the jewels and the precious stones. Antar rejoiced and smiled, and exclaimed—O what joy! where are thine eyes, O Ibla? but by the faith of an Arab there is not in all the treasures of the King one atom of her, no not one grain. And as he regarded the maidens of Greece and of Europe and the Cophtian slave girls, his joy was increased, and he blessed the termination of his expedition; and he kissed Mubidan's breast and beard, and he praised him in these words:

“Thou hast granted me favours, and I must  
“publish my gratitude; thou hast accomplished  
“my every wish for happiness. I will thank thee  
“as long as I live, and if I die, my bones in their  
“grave shall praise thee.”

Mubidan was truly gratified at Antar's praises. Renowned hero, said he, we do not mean that you should be content with this small gift, for this is not our property. You shall soon behold our beneficence; this is the wealth and these the jewels, the blue-eyed Greek, whom you killed and made to drink of the cup of death and disgrace, brought with him. But we would not have consigned this most precious property, and these maidens who resemble the constellations, but to one who should vanquish and debase him: and verily, you are the irresistible one, that has done that, and the



property becomes your property, and you have obtained it by your actions. He then ordered the slaves to spread carpets in a splendid mansion, and to arrange the vases and ewers; and they did as they were ordered: they laid out the dinner tables before Monzar and Antar and their companions. And when Antar observed the variety of delicious meats, of mutton and pigeons and thrushes, and the quantity of doves, and the profusion of sweetmeats, he turned towards Monzar, and said—My lord, are these various viands their usual victuals? are they at all times accustomed to such luscious things? for I see here no camel's flesh. What art thou talking of? cried Monzar; think no more of the inhabitants of the wilds and deserts, and those that drink camel's milk night and day; habituate thyself to the inhabitants of towns and cities, for thou must live in the vicinity of great Kings. So Antar ate till he was satisfied; the glasses passed round, and they killed the jovial hours in mirth and merriment: and when the female slaves knew they were the property of Antar, they came to offer their service, and whenever he got up or sat down, they surrounded him: but he would not take the least notice of them, for no one but Ibla was in his heart.

O Aboolfawaris, said Monzar, thou dost not delight in, or seem to look on thy slaves with pleasure;



or feel sensible of thy high dignity. Remove all painful reflections, or thoughts of thine own country, for thou hast risen to the rank of princes ; and were the Chieftains of thy nation to see thee, how they would envy thee ! Antar heard this ; he sighed from his sorrowing heart, and tears flowed from his eyes. O my lord, said he, I swear by your existence, all this grandeur has no value, no charm in my eyes ; love of my native land is the fixed passion of my soul, and he thus continued :

“ The fresh breeze comes in the morn, and when  
“ it blows on me with its refreshing essence, it is  
“ more grateful to me than all which my power has  
“ obtained in nightly depredations—than all my  
“ property and wealth. The realms of Chosroe I  
“ would not covet, were the phantom of my love to  
“ vanish from my sight. May the showers of rain  
“ ever bedew the lands and mounds of Shoorebah !  
“ lands, where the brilliancy of the veiled full  
“ moons may be seen in the obscurity of their sable  
“ ringlets—where my heart chases among them a  
“ damsel whose eyes are painted with antimony,  
“ more lovely than the Houri. Thou mayst see  
“ in her teeth a liquor when she smiles, where the  
“ wine cup is studded with pearls. The fawn has  
“ borrowed the magic of her eye, and it is the lion  
“ of the earth that chases its prey for her beauty.  
“ Lovely maid—delicately formed—beauteous—en-



“chanting! and at her charms is the brightness  
“of the moon abashed. O Ibla, the anguish of  
“absence is in my heart—thou mayst see the shafts  
“of death driven through my soul. O Ibla, did  
“not thy visionary form visit me by night, I should  
“pass the night in sorrows and restlessness. O  
“Ibla, how many calamities have I endured and  
“have plunged into them with my highly tempered  
“falchion, whilst the charging steeds and un-  
“daunted warriors dive into the ever perilous ocean  
“of death.”

Monzar was greatly surprised at Antar's fluency of speech, and the force of his love and passion, and he began conversing with him about what occupied his mind; and thus they continued till it was dark, and sleep came upon them. So they passed the night there. In the morning came Mubidan to them, accompanied by a troop of slaves. He complimented them, and inquired about their night's rest, and how they were pleased. Mount your horses, he continued, to go and compliment Chosroe, for he is prepared to go out hunting and amuse himself. As to me, said Antar, I have no other desire but speedily to return to my family and my country, that my friends and companions may see me, and the Asafeer camels I have with me as a marriage dower for my uncle's daughter.

Mubidan smiled at these words, and knew his



wish and object. O Aboolfawaris, said he, your expectations shall be gratified with respect to the Asafeer camels, all laden, and many others besides ; and you shall not return to your native land, ere you receive them all piled up with burthens. Antar expressed his thanks, and with Monzar mounted, and they all accompanied Mubidan, till on perceiving Nushirvan they instantly dismounted. Antar presented himself, and attempted to kiss Chosroe's feet in the stirrup, but the King not only prevented him, but stooped towards him, and kissed him between the eyes ; and never had Nushirvan conferred such a mark of distinction on any one but Antar, the destroyer of heroes, on account of his having vanquished the Greek warrior, and having removed distress and affliction from his mind. He ordered some noble Arab horses to be brought before Antar ; and the satraps delivered to him some of the finest breed, all glittering with housings of burnished gold. Antar mounted, and Chosroe kept him by his side and treated him as a companion, and conversed with him, and inquired about his night's rest, and his love for his tribe and friends. They continued their ride till they reached the hunting spot ; but no one entered that place except Nushirvan, when he wished to hunt and amuse himself ; and guards were stationed over it on all sides, fearful that any one should enter ; and as it was filled in all quarters



and directions, the wild beasts and deer ran away from before them; and as the horsemen advanced, the birds took to flight from every part; the warriors galloped and the heroes raced their steeds, and they spread abroad in all directions.

When Antar observed this sport, he urged on his horse with the other riders, and pursued a herd of deer with great eagerness, and at length overtook them; he galloped among them, and stretched many of them on the plain, and he was much amused and pleased. But whilst he was thus occupied, behold an horseman pounced down upon him like an eagle, and as he came up to him, he opened wide his arm, and stretching himself out, struck Antar a violent blow: it fell between his shoulders; it staggered him, and almost laid him prostrate; but he recovered himself; he was however tottering from the back of his horse, when,—Take that, thou Hedjaz dog! cried the villain; and if thou hast any breath of life in thee, come on and fight, for I must slay thee, thou vile black, as thou slewest my cousin Khosrewan, and the Greek, and made them drink of the cup of death and disgrace; and thou hast obtained possession of all that property and those beauteous slaves, and thou art exalted in the presence of Chosroe.

Now this horseman was Bahram, the chief of Deelem. He conceived against Antar a deadly ha-



tred and envy, which consumed his heart and his body ; and when Chosroe ordered him not to get into any disputes with Antar, warning him against his superior powers, Bahram went to his own people, and said to them—If this slave depart in safety with all his spoil and plunder, our honour will be debased among the tribes of the Cross and the Priest's gown, and no one will have any respect for us. From that time he indulged to such a degree his envy against Antar, that he watched him till he thus caught him alone in the hunt, and traitorously assailed him. But he knew not that Antar was a warrior, fixed as the mountain's roots ; and as he still saw him firmly seated on his horse, he grasped his sword and advanced at him ; but Antar, recovering from the violence of the blow, wheeled round his horse and waited till he recognised his foe : then he sought him as a bird of prey the weakest dove, and his assault was the assault of the fiercest lion ; and thus he addressed him :

“ The Almighty has exposed thee to a lion  
“ warrior, that thou mayest fall subdued by my  
“ sword, O thou, sprung from the worshippers of  
“ the sunbeams, and from those who adore the  
“ blazing flames. Fate will repay thee, for it has  
“ devoted thee to the fight with me, and to the hor-  
“ rors of my strength. Despair ; all thy hopes are  
“ frustrated, founded on the crush of thy mace and



“ the warrior yell. Thou art indeed like the moth,  
“ that when it sees the flame imagines its safety is  
“ in its destruction. Stand firm then to the spear-  
“ thrust of him whose force thou hast sought.  
“ Thou wouldst insult a lion, powerful in every com-  
“ bat. Take then the spear-thrust from the hand  
“ of one to whom the dæmons of the desert have  
“ bowed in submission, and from whom they implore  
“ the aid of God.”

Then he came down on him like a cloud, and he aimed a slight thrust at him with the heel of his spear, and broke his ribs, and threw him from the back of his horse the distance of two spears' lengths. The warriors of Deelem beheld the deed, and thought he was dead and in a state of annihilation ; and they all rushed down upon Antar, crying at him in their various dialects. But he met them like a flash of lightning, and he began driving at them and repulsing them—his eyeballs turned red, they appeared like crimson blood—he grasped his never-failing Dhami in his hand, resolved not to leave a Deelemite alive. Just then came up Chosroe with his visiers and satraps, and they cried out to the Deelemites in Persian, for they had heard what Bahram had done : and the Deelemites withdrew from the combat, saying, This black slave has brought disgrace upon us, and has slain our Chief! 'Tis false, said Mubidan, ye foul wretches of Deelem,



your Chief is the aggressor ; but he ought in duty to have treated him kindly, and have waited on him himself, for he has done for us what no human being could do, and if he has slain your Chief, he is not to blame.

Mubidan then requested Antar to advance, who related all that had passed between him and Bahram ; and Chosroe believed his words, for he was aware of the folly of his servant. He then ordered his satraps to seize the Deelemites, and bring them before him to strike off their heads. They seized them all, and pinioned their shoulders and bound their arms. But Antar, seeing Bahram's attendants thus disgraced, dismounted from Abjer, and advanced towards the great King, and kissing the earth before him, begged him to pardon them, saying, O my lord, pardon is becoming in you, and most suitable for such as you—here I kiss your noble hands, praying you to forgive them this crime, for to-morrow I intend to return home : my objects and wishes with respect to you are accomplished, and I do not wish to be mentioned after my departure, but for virtuous deeds ; and let it not be said of me, I went unto a tribe, and left it in disgrace and clothed with shame.

Chosroe admired Antar's benevolence and generosity of soul ; he granted his request, and released the Deelemites. At mid-day he returned from the



hunt, and repaired to a garden unequalled in any city of the world, and in it was collected all that the lip or the tongue can covet. It was a superb palace, like a fairy pavilion—ninety cubits in length, and seventy cubits wide, built of marble and red cornelian; in the centre was a fountain filled with rose-water and purest musk, in the middle of it was a column of emerald, and on its summit a hawk of burnished gold: its eyes were topazes and its beak jasper; round it were various birds, scattering from their bills upon Chosroe, and all that were present, musk and ambergris. The whole edifice was scented with perfumes, and the ceilings of the palace glittered with gold and silver. It was one of the wonders of the period, and the miracle of the age. When Antar entered, his mind was bewildered at the pictures and colours he saw, and he thus expressed himself.

“ A Palace—greetings and peace be on it—Time  
“ has spread its beauties over it. A Palace—the  
“ roofs of cities might stand beneath its roof. On  
“ it are the directions for the paths of virtue.  
“ Strong are its columns, gilded are its walls; man-  
“ kind may glory in its magnificence. Over its  
“ gates have jewels and pure unalloyed gold disposed  
“ their honours; there is nothing further to be de-  
“ sired. On it are the wonders of every species of  
“ miracle; the senses are bewildered in describing



“ it ; beautifully perfect is every elegant device :  
“ nothing can exceed its excellence. And the King  
“ shines above all Kings in his acts and his justice—  
“ May days and years endure for him !”

At the upper end of the gardens there was raised for Chosroe a throne of burnished gold and pillars of green emerald, and pedestals of silver that sent forth refulgent rays in the darkest night. Round it were stools of ivory and ebony inlaid with brilliant gold. Chosroe seated himself on the throne, and ordered Monzar and Antar to sit by him ; thus exalting him high above all that were present. The attendants and suite also sat down ; every one took his place ; and they were no sooner arranged than the dinner tables were served with various dainties, and a profusion of fruits and sweetmeats. Chosroe advanced, and all that were present, and partook of the repast. But Antar's eyes were in confusion. He sat down on his knees, and bared his arms, chucking the things into his mouth, but never moved his jaws : he gorged himself like an hungry Arab, and roared like a wild beast, to the great amazement of Chosroe, who supplied him with every variety that was before him : and Antar devoured them, as he asked Monzar the name of each. So they brought him meats of all kinds till he had crammed his stomach ; then raising his head up he thus spoke :



“ Hail, O King, whose bounties, in his age, stand  
“ in lieu of the rain. O thou, the Kiblah\* of peti-  
“ tioners—O crown of glory—O full moon of this  
“ period—O thou planet Saturn—O thou whose  
“ seat is raised above Pisces—O thou the refuge of  
“ all that sorrow—thy station is on high far above  
“ the world—it is a rain-cloud that bestows its  
“ showers on mankind. When he fights, all the  
“ world fear his assaults, as if a lion were by his  
“ side. He is the seat of justice in his age—liberality  
“ and equity reign in his realms. O ye dwellers  
“ in the land of Abs, I have received from Chosroe  
“ and his munificence what cannot be described  
“ or enumerated—no day can suffice to detail an  
“ account of such goodness. The King has attained  
“ the heights of virtue by his glory ; and happiness  
“ dwells in his palace. With him I am firmly  
“ established in honour, and in his gardens I have  
“ beheld a fountain whose waters abound like his  
“ favours, and the liberality of his palm. His  
“ garden contains every flower of every species,  
“ and brilliant are their charms. The birds  
“ in every note sing as if they were praising his  
“ bounties to us. He is a King ! whenever he  
“ charges in the day of battle, the lions of the war are  
“ astonished at his greatness, Victory is among his

\* The point to which the Arabs turned their faces in prayer.



“ companions, and Glory and Honour are his friends.  
“ Amongst nations then will I speak my gratitude  
“ for his favours, and I will engage the horsemen  
“ on his side.”

When Antar had delighted the King by his eloquence, the slaves presented him the wine, and they poured him out wine that was like fire, and resembled the rosy cheeks of a mistress, till the liquor played with his wits, and refreshed all the pleasures he had enjoyed. Antar looked upon this jovial feast as a dream: for his heart and soul were at home, and all his desires centered in Ibla. After some time Chosroe addressed him, and asked him questions, and joked and laughed with him, inquiring about his country and its habitations. Antar related all that had passed with his uncle Malik and the tribe of Abs and so forth; and when the King was certain that his affection for Ibla was unshaken, and that his love could not possibly admit of increase;—I am truly surprised, O Absian, said he, at your forbearance and your reserve, your grievance being of such a nature. O my lord, said Antar, I swear by the existence of your munificence, that is unbounded, and the liberality of your hands, that can never be forgotten, I am a dead man among the living! O Aboolfawaris, added Monzar, abandon the expressions of ignorant Arabs, and recollect that you are in a place where decorum and civility are



expected. Fill your glass and drink, and listen to the voice of the songstress who would soothe the afflicted; and enjoy the happy hours. Ah! said Antar, how delightful would be all you say were my heart at ease, and thus he exclaimed:

“Wine cannot calm my heart, sickness will not  
“quit my body—my eyelids are ever sore—tears  
“ever stream in torrents from them. The song-  
“stress would soothe my heart with her voice, but  
“my love-sick heart loathes it. The remembrances  
“of Ibla draw off my mind from her song, and I  
“would say to my friend, this is all a dream. In  
“the land of Hedjaz are the tents of my tribe, and  
“to meet them again is forbidden me. Amongst  
“the tents of that people is a plump-hipped damsel  
“that never removes her veil, and under her veil  
“are eyes that inspire sickness, and the pupils of  
“her eyes strike with disease. Between her lips is  
“the purest musk, and camphor diluted with wine.  
“My love and madness are dear to me, for to him  
“who loves, sweet is the pang of love. O daughter  
“of Malik, let my foe triumph in my absence; let  
“them watch or sleep. But in my journey I have  
“encountered events that would turn children grey  
“in their cradles. Pleasures have succeeded to  
“difficulties, and I have met a monarch whom no  
“words can describe—a King to whom all the  
“creation is a slave, and to whom fortune is a vas-



“sal, whose hand distributes bounties, so that I  
“know not whether it is the sea or a cloud. The  
“sun has invested him with a crown, so that the  
“world need not fear darkness. The stars are his  
“jewels, in which there is a moon brilliant and lu-  
“minous, as at its full. Mankind is corporeal, and  
“he is spiritual. Let every joint and every mem-  
“ber laud his name. Live for ever, Prince of the  
“horsemen, long as the dove pours its plaintive  
“note, live for ever!”

Chosroe was greatly pleased and surprised at these verses, for he was himself eloquent in the Arabian dialect. Were I to give you my kingdom, O Absian, said he, it would be a small gift in comparison with your deserts, for what I can grant is but transitory, like all other things; but your commendations will endure for ages. Oblige me, and demand of me what may gratify you, that I may at any rate make you some compensation for your praises. Indeed, said Antar, I have fallen by your bounty into a sea that has neither length nor breadth, and I shall not return but with what will raise my glory amongst my countrymen; but I really do wish my uncle's daughter, Ibla, had on her head a tiara like this, for it would set her off finely; but I know it is very ill-bred in me to make such a request.

Chosroe laughed and smiled at Antar's remark: he spoke to one of his satraps, who rose up, and



in a short time returned, and with him were four slaves bearing a canopy of silver: on the top of it was a hawk formed of burnished gold; its eyes were of topazes, and its feet emeralds. This canopy, Aboolfawaris, shall serve your uncle's daughter to sit in on the night of her marriage with you, and in this tiara shall she be wedded to you; and he took the tiara from his head, and untying his girdle and mantle and his coronet, he laid them down in the pavilion, desiring Antar to accept them all. Antar advanced towards the King, kissed his hands, and thus addressed him:

“ O King of the universe, I thank thee for the  
“ vast gifts thou hast bestowed upon me: thou hast  
“ granted me favours I cannot bear; thou art the  
“ most beneficent of all that tread the earth! thou  
“ art the man to whom all Kings bow in the day of  
“ battle; every Arab and every Persian. But thy  
“ slave still lives in the agony he endures from his  
“ love, his weakness, and his passion. He lives far  
“ from his friends, for whom he thirsts; and lan-  
“ guishing for Ibla, he lives restless in torments.”

The King's astonishment increased. Absian, said he, oblige me by demanding what more you want; I request of you, said Antar, the renewal of the appointment of King Monzar. I will do it, Antar, said Chosroe; and he directed it to be written throughout the imperial dominions, that Monzar



should not be removed from his government of Mas-sema; and had he even a blind daughter, she should be the ruler thereof. Have you any other want? said he, delivering the letter to Antar. I have no other wish, said Antar, but to return to my country and home.

When those that envied and hated Antar among the Persians, on account of the presents and honours he had received, saw this, they conspired to destroy him, and carry off his property. Now Chosroe had a famous wrestler, called Rostam, and he was celebrated for his pugilistic skill through various realms and cities. Antar's enemies went to him in order to instigate him against Antar, saying—Know, most expert of men, that this insignificant worthless black slave has received Chosroe's tiara and immense wealth, and is returning with it to his own country. Rostam sprang up like a lion, and presenting himself to the King without asking permission, kissed the ground—O great King, said he, if you have any consideration for me, let not a slave of the desert be more dignified than I am. You have made him one of your associates. I am the pugilist of your throne, and therefore let not that head be raised above me.

Antar heard and saw, but understood not what was passing. Rostam, said Chosroe, abandon this envious disposition, or thou wilt die of anguish. I



wish, said Rostam, he would present himself before you, and then I will prove to you he is not worthy your esteem. I will slay him with this mace, and will unite him to the tribes of Aad and Themood\*.

On hearing this, the King was greatly vexed. Do you comprehend, said he to Antar, what he says, Aboolfawaris? I have not understood what he said, but I can perceive that he is very jealous, and that his head is like the head of a camel, said Antar. Let me hear what he wants, that I may comply with his request. This man is my wrestler, said Chosroe, and is come to try his strength with you in wrestling, and prove your powers in the combat. Is he not one of your warriors? asked Antar; and those with him, are they not your men? Yes, said Chosroe. I forbade his interference with you, but he will not be dissuaded. Well, said Antar, I cannot allow my arm to be extended to his injury, and my heart will not allow me to hurt him on account of your bounty and favour, and great kindness towards me: not that this unwillingness on my part originates in fear, or in any inferiority to him; but that the Arabs should hear of me, and accuse me of making troubles and dissensions; nor that the noble Arabs may say of me that Antar, the son of Shedad, presented himself to Chosroe, and partook of his food, and then slew his subjects in his presence.

\* Two tribes of giants, who for their infidelity were destroyed by a blast from heaven, in the fabulous period of Arabian history.



Aboolfawaris, said the King, much agitated, if you wrestle with him, will you kill him? Yes, said Antar, for he only seeks to wrestle with me, that he may destroy me; and you know, O King, that wrestling is one species of warfare; and justice and propriety are required in it: and if one antagonist prevails over the other antagonist, he abuses and reviles him; but should his antagonist be angry at him, he kills him.

Listen to me, said Chosroe to Rostam; do not provoke this man. I fear for you, lest he overcome you; and if you do not behave properly to him, he will tear out your life from between your ribs. I must wrestle with him, said Rostam: if he kills me, let my blood and property be his, and esteemed duly won among these warriors. Strip off your clothes then, said Chosroe, his countenance inflamed with wrath, and prepare for the combat. I will tell him that he may engage with you, and that your blood will be fairly his. So Rostam took off his garments, and was stripped from his shoulders, that were harder than a rock, and his twisted arms were like columns.

Arise, Aboolfawaris, said the King, and wrestle with him; and if he plays the fool with you, slay him, and hasten his death, and mind not the consequences: you are not answerable for his blood.

Antar sprang on his legs, and threw about his



arms, and twisted his skirts about his waistband; and as he was about to begin, Aboolfawaris, said Chosroe, you have not stripped, or put on the short breeches, as every pugilist does. By your existence, O King of the age, replied Antar, I never in my life wrestled with short breeches, and never will I wrestle but in the clothes of a horseman. Chosroe was greatly troubled. By the burning of fire, he exclaimed, never, in the course of my life, have I seen a man wrestle as a horseman, without breeches. To-day, said Antar, you shall see what I will do with Rostam in the presence of these warriors.

Antar went up to Rostam. Rostam bent himself like an arch, and appeared like a burning flame. He rushed upon Antar with all his force, for he looked on him as a common man, and he did not know that Antar, even in his youth, used to wrestle with he and she camels in the plains and the rocks. They grasped each other with their hands, they butted with their heads, they assaulted with their whole might, like two lions or two elephants. Rostam stretched out his hand at Antar's waistband, and clung to it, and attempted to lift him up in his arms; but he found him like a stone fixed in a tower, and he tottered before him. Then he repented of what he had done, and of having provoked Antar. He slackened his hold, and he ran round him for an hour, in the presence of Chosroe and his attendants. He then sprang behind him, and thrust his head between



his legs, and attempted to raise him on the back of his neck, and to dash him on the ground; but Antar knew what were his intentions and his secret designs: so he closed his knees on Rostam's neck, and almost made his eyeballs start from their sockets, and nearly deprived him of life. Rostam was terrified, and wished to escape from between his legs, but he could not; every attempt failed: Antar was like a block of stone growing on a desert or a mountain. Antar seized him by his breeches, and clung to him, and raised him up in his hands, like a sparrow in the claws of a bird of prey, and walked away with him among the multitude, wishing to wrestle quietly before the King. But Rostam, when he saw his life was in Antar's hands, like a young child was abashed and mortified before the warriors and satraps, and the great King. He clenched his fist, and struck Antar on the ear. Antar soon recovered from the blow—he returned to the threshold of the palace, and dashed him on the ground, and smashed him to atoms. Then presenting himself to Chosroe, he thus spoke:

“Death has resolved he should die slain, and  
“should be subdued and disgraced by me. Curses  
“on his hands! It was his arrogant folly that  
“pointed out the road by which he should be de-  
“stroyed. Had thy eyes beheld my deeds in the  
“combat, where the spears tear the hands of the  
“lancers, thou wouldst have feared for the ex-



“ tinction of his days when he outraged me in this  
“ lengthened action. O King, who hast enjoyed  
“ every glory, listen to my story and the account  
“ of my honours. He sought in every way to in-  
“ crease his fame by his deeds; so I left him after  
“ that reduced to infamy. Truly he hastened the  
“ time of his own fate, and his destiny was at my  
“ disposal. God ordained his death for his acts,  
“ and determined it should be executed by my  
“ hand. Hail, then, O King! live for ever in  
“ protected happiness that may never fail thee.”

Then was Nushirvan quite confounded at his powers. O King, said Antar, I swear by the two eyes of Ibla (to me the most sacred of oaths), that when I raised him on my hands, my only intention was to bring him before you and wrestle in your presence; but as he transgressed the fair laws of battle, there was nothing for him but death. Chosroe believed what he said, and ordered Rostam's property to be confiscated, and to be transferred to Antar, and he gave him a written assignment of his possessions and fiefs.

And when the day was spent, Monzar hemmed the signal for rising: Antar arose and asked Chosroe's permission to commence his journey: the order being given for his being supplied with the finest steeds, and all their golden accoutrements and rich housings. They went to the house that was set apart for them; where Antar found treasures



of wealth, and horses and mules, and he and she camels, and other goods no words can tell. Antar asked whence they came: Aboolfawaris, said Monzar, this is the property of Rostam: and they reposed till morning; when Mubidan came and complimented them, and as he was going with them to Nushirvan, said Antar to the Vizier, Indeed, my lord, you have overwhelmed your slave with favours and kindnesses, no tongue can describe; still I have one wish that you would allow me to view the Temples of Fire, that I may behold their ministers and treasures, and the service required in them. There let me observe its blazing, and how the officers supply the flame; so that, on my return home, I may be able to relate to my friends what I have seen in the Temples of Fire. O Aboolfawaris, replied Mubidan, I cannot possibly conduct you to the Temples of Fire, because you scoff at them. But if you are verily anxious to enter, purify your thoughts towards the adored God, and prostrate yourself in worship. I swear by the Almighty God, added Antar, that I do not visit them but with the purest views; for I am aware they are one of God's miracles. Upon this, Mubidan led him to the Chief Temple, where he beheld a magnificent building, of yellow brass, raised on pillars of steel, with precious stones in the interstices—the wonder of the age, to astonish the wisest of men. It had three stories, and to each story were three portals, and to each portal were



slaves and servants, stationed over the edifice. Antar gazed at these men with glittering forms; and round the waists of each were leather coverings in the form of short breeches; and they were standing at the doors of the Temple, some near and some at a distance. In their hands were pokers of steel, with which they raised the flame, heedless of the God of the two worlds, and uttering Magian words, that ravished the soul: whilst their Sheikh, seated on a bench of skin, chaunted in his own tongue. The fire blazed before him; the fuel was of aloe-wood; towards which they all addressed their prostrations, saying, "I and you, we laud the adored God." Mubidan accosted him with salutations, and prostrated himself before the fire, and walked round it, whilst Antar followed in great astonishment and surprise at all he did. However, he imitated him in every thing he observed him do; at which Mubidan was extremely pleased, seeing him thus walk round, and offer up his prayers. Ever, O Aboolfawaris, said he, may you continue your adorations to the fire, night and day; in it have I ever found my safety and prosperity. Never may any injury assail you! may no foe ever harm your person! My lord, replied Antar, where can we ever find a fire like your fire, for you kindle it with aloe-wood and perfumes; thence proceeds a delicious vapour, and thence issues this fragrant essence, that exhilarates the heart. But our abode is a barren waste, where nought is to be procured



but the dung of camels, and branches of green wood, whence proceeds a smoke and smell, to blind the sight and distract the brain, and to confuse the senses. Mubidan laughed, and felt convinced that Antar would never relinquish the worship of statues and images. After this, they quitted the Temple of Fire, and the fragrant odours, more exquisite than ambergris. Just then the recollection of Ibla occurred to his mind, and his imagination being agitated with his passion, he thus spoke:

“ The logs of aloe sparkle in the fire, and the  
 “ flames blaze high in the air; the sweetness of its  
 “ vapour refreshes my heart, when it is wafted  
 “ with a northerly wind. Its brilliancy and flame  
 “ are like the face of my beauteous Ibla. But,  
 “ O fire, blaze not—burn not—for in my heart is  
 “ a flame more furious than thee! Sleep has aban-  
 “ doned my eyes by night, when I behold my  
 “ friends in the wings of darkness. Delightful  
 “ would be to me the abode of my tribe, were I  
 “ even poor, and not worth a halter. In a distant  
 “ land, I should feel no more anxiety for the song,  
 “ though all its cities were in my possession. The  
 “ smoke of the herbs at home, when it is scented  
 “ even with camel’s dung, is sweeter to me than  
 “ the aloe-wood, and more brilliant to my eyes in  
 “ the obscurity of night. O my lord, my anxiety  
 “ increases to see my friends: so permit me to de-  
 “ part; thou art my stay and my support; be mer-  
 “ ciful, and compassionate my situation. I have



“no succour in the world but thou, towards the  
“success of my projects. So grant me my request;  
“and mayst thou ever live happy; mayst thou  
“live long, and glorious, and great, in every felicity  
“city and every honour.”

After this, Mubidan conducted Antar to the treasuries of the Persian monarch, where he opened chests full of the precious metals, and jewels, and pearls, and articles, that confounded the sight, and amazed the senses. Come, Aboolfawaris, said he, what do you want? What the king, in his munificence, replied Antar, has already bestowed on me, is sufficient for me. An Arab only prides himself on the number of his horses, and his he and she camels, and I have already obtained endless abundance; but to show my obedience, I will take these three strings, and this chaplet of jewels, for the daughter of my uncle, Ibla. But as he cast his eyes around, he beheld a pavilion, whose like no king of the world possessed. It was called the Hemisphere, and it was a load for forty camels. It first belonged to Shedad the son of Aad; it descended to Pharaoh, and afterwards to Nimrod, the son of Canaan; and it continued to descend from King to King till it came to the Emperor of Greece. At that time Chosroe and Cæsar reigned over the whole earth—and the Euphrates divided them. The Emperor ruled over the countries of Europe and the Christian tribes, and Chosroe Nushirvan ruled over the Arabs and the Persians.



But at all times the Emperor was obliged to pay tribute to the Monarch of Persia, for his orders were obeyed in every land. But one year the Emperor went to visit the Persian king; and as amongst all his riches he had nothing to offer as a present but this pavilion, he gave it to him; and by the command of Chosroe it was pitched at Modayin, and it occupied in its immensity half the land of Modayin. The Persian king was greatly astonished, and every beholder was amazed; for it was of network, formed of plates of gold and silver and emeralds; and there were painted on it all that God had created—cities, villages, towns, trees, birds, countries, waters, and rivers. And Chosroe, as he looked at its beauties, was so overjoyed, that he relieved the Emperor from the capitation and tribute for ten whole years. It remained in the treasury of the King till Antar came with Monzar to Modayin, and slew the Greek warrior, and entered the treasury of the Persian Monarch: and as he looked at the pavilion, he said to Mubidan, I wish to have that pavilion, that I may present it to Ibla on the night of my marriage. Mubidan smiled, and ordered the slaves to remove the pavilion to the house; and they did as they were bid: and as they were quitting the treasury, said Antar to Mubidan, Know, my lord, that when I entered the temples of the Fire, I asked of it a favour; I know not whether it will grant it, or whether it will detain me longer, and withhold it. What was



thy wish, horseman of the age? said Mubidan. I requested, replied Antar, a speedy return to my family and country. Know then, said Mubidan, if the Fire consent to thy prayer, to-morrow, at an early hour, preparations shall be made for the journey. Upon this they proceeded to the King's palace. He received them most graciously, and seating Antar near him, inquired after his health, and what he had received. Verily, said Antar, the tongue fails in describing what I, your slave, have received from your bounty and munificence; and I have nothing further to demand, but a return to my family and country. But the King, turning towards Mubidan, threw him a roll of leaves, and said, Put aside all that is noted in this roll, property and jewels, for Aboolfawaris Antar. I have written to the treasury for money—to the wardrobe for superb stuffs—to the armoury for cuirasses and arms—and to the keeper of the women for male and female slaves; and let the whole be given over to Antar, in addition to the confiscated property, and with what he has chosen, and the pavilion called the Hemisphere; so that no blame or reproach be attached to me, but the reproach be on you alone. His departure must still be delayed three days: and when all is prepared for his journey, inform me, that I may also go forth to bid him farewell, and do towards him as he deserves at my hands.

Early next day Antar started up, and having



kissed the ground, he and Mubidan went forth. The latter sent for the treasurer, and told him what quantity of money the king had assigned to Aboolfawaris Antar; and he said, I have the Great King's order for a hundred thousand imperial dinars, and a hundred thousand Dakyanos dinars, each dinar of the value of seven, and four hundred thousand dirhems of silver to distribute; and five hundred embroidered velvet robes, and a thousand silk vests, of the royal manufacture, as presents; and, moreover, four thousand pieces of light silk for khelaats, to give away; and be all this property ready, in chests and on mules. Mubidan called for the armourer, and told him what the King had ordered respecting pavilions, tents, and cuirasses, and arms, for Aboolfawaris Antar, saying, I have received the royal signet to assign over to Aboolfawaris Antar twenty of the grandest pavilions, and pavilions denominated Quarter Globes; and four thousand common tents, and four thousand cuirasses, and four thousand breast-plates, and every thing of that description, according to the list; and all with their respective cases and camels. Mubidan sent for the keeper of the women, and communicated the orders of the Great King respecting Aboolfawaris Antar, saying, I have received the royal signet to consign over to Antar four hundred white male slaves, with their clothes and accoutrements, and their horses and their trappings; and four hundred strong black slaves, fit for battle and war, with their Chief Abool-



mout, with all their horses and their accoutrements, and their breast-plates, and cuirasses; and four hundred Georgian female slaves, and four hundred fair European slaves, and four hundred Copht, and four hundred Persian slaves, and four hundred slaves of Tibah; and let every slave be mounted on a mule, and under every slave let there be two chests of rich silk.

And Mubidan having directed his deputy to prepare all he had enumerated in three days, Antar and Monzar, and the heroes that were with them, withdrew, preceded by servants loaded with presents, and khelaats, and money. But when the three days had expired, the slaves came forth with their burthens, and prepared the camels and the mules. And just as Antar was setting out, behold Mubidan came towards him, and taking him by the hand, conducted him to Nushirvan. As soon as Antar entered the hall of audience, he kissed the ground. The King directed him to be seated. Aboolfawaris, said he, I have heard from King Monzar that you slew in his presence one of the lions of Khifan, your feet being fettered, and only your hands at liberty.—Now this event is thus explained:—When Bahram, the Chief of Dilem, saw that Antar had acquired such an increase of wealth, all that the Greek had brought with him from the Emperor, and all the property of the wrestler Rostam, and presents and donations which were in Mubidan's possession, the disease of envy fell upon



him, and preyed upon his heart and body. He presented himself to Chosroe, and exclaimed, O most noble Monarch, the Kings of the world have not received from you what you have bestowed on this black slave; and he is a worthless, insignificant wretch! He slew your satrap Khosrewan; he routed his army of twenty thousand horse; and the Kings of the age will say of you, that your munificence is only the result of your fear of his sword and spear. The Emperor will also be enraged against you, because he has slain his warrior, and made him drink of the cup of death and perdition; and he will demand of you blood and revenge. My opinion is, you should seize this wicked slave; take back all the presents you have made him; and detain him in slavery and bondage. Slay him, and make him drink of the cup of annihilation. The King was exceedingly wrath; And what, he exclaimed, shall be my excuse with the Kings of the world, when they shall say, Nushirvan gave a Bedoween immense wealth, then betrayed him, and took back all he had bestowed on him? I shall be called a miser. Renounce such a project, O Bahram! If you fear the reproaches of Kings, returned Bahram, send for this slave into your presence! tell him you have heard from King Monzar that he slew a lion of Khifan before him when his feet were fettered, and his hands alone at liberty. He will say, Yes, O King! Then say you wish to see him combat



with a lion. Let loose at him your lion, that you have brought up and named Khemees—huge as an elephant: a beast, your armies and your horsemen dare not face. Should he slay that ferocious lion, he will have merited at your hands the wealth you have bestowed on him. Should the lion destroy him, all your property will revert to you. The Kings of the wilds and the deserts will hold you excused, and no reproach be attached to your name. The Monarch hung his head towards the ground; and after a little reflection, he exclaimed, But should Antar slay the lion, and make him taste of the cup of vengeance ——. Should Antar slay the lion, said Bahram, interrupting him, then let my blood and my property be legally his. Chosroe joyed in his heart, and ordered him to be seated; and Mu-bidan was directed to produce the hero. So he repaired to his dwelling, and, preventing his departure, conducted him to the presence of the Great King. When Antar entered the audience-chamber, he made his salutation, and kissed the ground. The King ordered him to sit down; and after talking familiarly with him for a while, I have heard, he continued, O Aboolfawaris, from King Monzar, that you engaged a lion in his presence, your legs being fettered, and only your hands at liberty. I am very anxious to see you thus contend with a lion which I have brought up, and named Khemees; huge as an immense elephant—of amazing strength



and fierceness. O my lord, cried Antar, have you only sent for me to meet a lion? He is the veriest dog of the wilds and the plains. By your life, O King of the age, I was thinking that you could only have called on me in some great crisis, or against a vast army, in order that I might destroy them with my sword. But if it be only to encounter this brute, come on, as you please! The Monarch was struck with wonder at the strength of his heart, and commanded the lion to be brought forth. A concourse of people went out; and having bound the beast of the forests with chains of iron, and five stout warriors holding each a link of the chain, they dragged him out. His body was of enormous length, his make broad, his chest wide, his nostrils flat, his mane yellow, and flashes of fire shot from his eyes. Each fang was a horror, and his claws terrors. At the sight, the King's indignation against Bahram increased; but turning towards Antar, Now, Aboolfawaris, he cried, descend; let me behold your contest with this furious lion. Antar instantly sprang up; and tucking the skirts of his garments within his girdle, he grasped his sword in his right, and his shield in his left hand, and, thus armed, stalked towards the lion, his heart harder than rock; and, as he thought of Ibla, he thus spoke:

“ O lion, stand firm—flinch not, attack me, for  
“ I fear thee not—assault me, I will not shrink  
“ from the fight with one like thee—I dread thee



“not. If thou thinkest thy face stern, I am also  
“fierce of aspect, but no coward. This day thou  
“shalt lie prostrate—thou shalt be humbled low  
“in the dust.—Receive the blow from the arm of  
“Antar, and lie deeply dyed in thine own blood.”

The mind of the King was rapt in astonishment at these verses; and he felt more and more the intrepidity of Antar, who stood in front of the lion, and, shouting at him, began to draw him on, as a ferocious lion does a weaker animal:—sometimes he assailed him on the left, sometimes from the right; and the lion knew not which way to turn in the presence of Antar, who, at length, crying out “O by Abs! O by Adnan! I am ever the lover of Ibla!” struck the beast with Dharni between the eyes, and the sword continued to slide through his body till it issued out between his thighs. Antar cut him in twain before the Hall of Audience as if he had divided him with a scale; then, coming forward, he prayed for the continuation of the Monarch’s glory. “Never be thy hand paralysed!” cried Chosroe: “may no one ever harm thee, O Aboolfawaris, thou ornament of every assembly! for thou art indeed an undaunted lion, and a victorious warrior! and thy enemies are overthrown.” He instantly ordered Bahram to be seized and his head to be struck off, and his property to be given to Antar—money, furniture, and slaves; and though Antar wished to intercede for him, “By the burning of the Fire, O horseman of



the world!" exclaimed the King, "he is a villain. " It was he who persuaded me to order this combat: but I only consented to his suggestions, that all his possessions might devolve on you; and I now grant you all his wealth. Take them, and depart, but do not reproach me for my offence." The officers struck off Bahram's head, and loaded Antar with every article he possessed. Monzar rejoiced at Antar's accession of wealth; for he had been the cause of raising the honour and credit of the Arabs among the worshippers of Fire. Thus Antar departed from the land of Modayin with boundless riches and incalculable wealth. The Great King also mounted, with Mubidan and all the Satraps, to take leave of Antar: and when they were at some distance from Modayin, and had plunged into the barren desert, Antar dismounted from Abjer, and, moving towards the King, kissed his feet in the stirrup, and begged him to return with his attendants, thus addressing him:

" O thou whose station is sublime—in thy beneficence above the height of Sirius and Aries!—  
" thou art the king like whom there is no king,  
" and whose munificence is renowned over hill and  
" dale. O thou, my hope! thou hast overwhelmed  
" me with favours. O thou whose largesses resemble the beauteous rain-cloud! thou hast bestowed gifts on me whose extent I cannot count;  
" so liberal is thy hand, O thou, my life and my  
" hope! thou art the man to whom all kings must



“submit; and in thy justice thou hast surpassed  
“all thy predecessors.”

Do not imagine, exclaimed the King with augmented delight, that we have been able duly to recompense you. What we have given you is perishable, as every thing human is—but your praises will endure for ages. He then kissed Antar between the eyes, and bade him adieu, giving him as a last token a rich robe: and begging him to visit him frequently, he departed.

Monzar and Antar travelled side by side, traversing the rocks and the deserts in social converse, and reciting verses day and night until they reached Hirah: and the day of their arrival was a general festival. The flags and standards were waved over their heads; and the Arabs were amazed when they saw the immense wealth that accompanied Antar. Monzar lodged Antar at a magnificent mansion, and made a splendid entertainment and feast for all classes. Antar, after a stay of three days, on the fourth morning resumed his journey. Monzar presented him a thousand Asafeer camels and five hundred loads of the rarities of Irak, and fifty noble steeds, of the most generous breed, with their armour and coats of mail, and a hundred female slaves and two hundred strong male slaves; and the chief of all the slaves was Aboolmout. O Aboolfawaris, said Monzar, will you take an escort to protect you and conduct you home? What say you? exclaimed Antar; is one like me in want of



a tax-gatherer? can one like me fear even a countless host? Were even whole armies to assail me, I would meet them! Were even Death to encounter me, I would engage him! O my lord, he added, I only consider all this wealth as proceeding from you. I am now one of your freedmen and your slave—for when you had power over me you gave me liberty, and when I was a prisoner you released me. May your sword be ever drawn in conquest against your foes! and may your munificence ever flow towards your suppliants! And as he kissed the ground he thus continued:

“ O great and renowned Monarch, be glorified!  
“ for no one can ever vaunt himself superior to thy  
“ glories. As to liberality, thy hand has grasped  
“ it all: as to rain, thy palm bestows it—and thy  
“ hand calms every woe. How many hast thou  
“ relieved from sorrow, whose pains vanish as soon  
“ as thy countenance appears! The copiousness  
“ of generosity flows from thy hand in eternal  
“ streams; and one may see thy fingers ever sup-  
“ plying, ever showering. The armies of battle  
“ are thy drawn sword, and wherever it moves  
“ against the foe, it vanquishes. May the glory it  
“ desires never fail it, and may the world ever be  
“ at thy command! May thy lord ever grant thee  
“ every favour, and mayst thou avert and subdue  
“ all thy enemies! May the projects and efforts of  
“ man ever fail against thy enterprises, and may  
“ glory ever belong to the grasp of the hand and



“ the fingers of King Monzar ! He has attained  
“ every honour, every virtue, every excellence,  
“ every felicity, and universal liberality.”

Most marvellous ! exclaimed Monzar : this is indeed the man who has so nobly treated me, and raised me to the highest dignity with his laudatory poetry. Antar embraced Monzar, and bade him farewell : whilst Monzar, dismounting from his horse, took off all his clothes, and put them on Antar, giving him also every thing else he had with him on that day, and then returned home with his attendants. But Antar traversed the deserts and the wildernesses, his slaves marching before him with all his property : and he rejoiced in the accomplishment of his hopes, except when the greatness of his anxious love afflicted him ; and as he approached the land of Hijaz his passions were roused, and he thus spoke :

“ Is it the breeze from the heights of the land of  
“ Shurebah that revives me and resuscitates my  
“ heart, or is it the gale from the tamarisks ? Is  
“ it the flame that consumes me for Ibla, or is it  
“ the lightning’s flash from her dwelling that de-  
“ prives me of my senses ? O thou spot where she  
“ resides, may thy hillocks be ever inhabited by  
“ the families, and may thy plains be ever crowded  
“ with friends ! Have thine eyelids been seen to  
“ watch at night, as my eyelids have watched ever  
“ since I quitted thee ? And has the turtle-dove’s  
“ moan filled thee with sorrow in thy sleeplessness,



“ as the turtle-dove’s moan has distressed me? I  
“ departed from thee not uneasy, or much in  
“ anguish; but my uncle has outraged me, and  
“ coveted my death. He has exposed me to a sea  
“ of dangers, but I plunged into it with my glitter-  
“ ing two-edged blade. I have cut through the  
“ neck of fortune, and the nocturnal vicissitudes  
“ and the nightly calamities have trembled. My  
“ good fortune has seated me in a mansion of glory,  
“ man and genii could never attain. I have en-  
“ countered in Irak horsemen that may be accounted  
“ as whole tribes when the battle rages. I am  
“ returning with the wealth of Chosroe and Cæsar  
“ —with he and she camels, horses, and slaves;  
“ and, when I reach home, my enemies shall weep,  
“ as one day they laughed when Shiboob announced  
“ my death. They indeed sought my destruction  
“ in a distant land; but they knew not that death  
“ was—my sword and my spear!”



## CHAPTER VII.

ANTAR continued to pass over the plains and wilds until he arrived at a place called Zatool Menahil. Now Antar, whenever he approached a halting-place, always sent a slave forward, lest any one should be concealed there. Accordingly he despatched a slave, who on reaching the spot saw it already occupied by five black slaves, of the colour of pitch and night; and with them was a magnificent howdah, on the summit of which was a golden crescent. Within was a person weeping and sobbing from a wounded heart, and screaming out, Woe unto these dastard slaves! Where are thine eyes, O Antar, that they might behold me? And thus she continued her lament:

“ Where are thine eyes, O knight of men and  
“ genii? Oh! that thou couldst see me in the infamy  
“ of despair with wretches who respect no protection.  
“ No—no, and have no mercy! O that I had never  
“ lived in this age of traitors, who only see in thee  
“ my misery and dishonour! Why has God pro-  
“ longed my existence now the lion is gone, who  
“ ever protected the country and the women? May  
“ God ever bedew his grave with plenteous showers  
“ that fail not! for, in truth, he was a knight and



“ a hero that could vanquish with his fingers the  
 “ beasts of the desert, and destroy the warriors in  
 “ the day of battle, whenever he appeared in the  
 “ plain of contention.”

Antar arriving at that moment, was greatly surprised at this address; and hastening up to the slaves, Ye accursed wretches! he exclaimed, whose are these tents? Who is it that intends to halt here? Who is this that is crying and weeping, and is calling on the name of Antar? Go to thine own work, replied one of them: Away! away! or thou wilt soon be a corpse—Away to the desert, before the Nocturnal Evil overtake thee, or the Depredator of the Age take thee prisoner, and seize thy arms and thy horse, and join thee to his other captives. Antar’s whole heart and soul throbbed at such language; his agony and anguish were intense, when lo! the stranger raised up the veil of the howdah, and a damsel appeared, exclaiming, O my cousin! art thou among the living, and I in the power of the foe? Antar gazed earnestly, and behold it was Ibla! She had thrown herself on the ground, and was endeavouring to rise, but she could not stand, so exhausted was she by her grief. At such a sight Antar’s distress and affliction augmented. What means this dreadful event, this calamity? he cried: Who is it that has forced thee to this desert? Whence come these slaves with thee? He instantly rode towards her; the slaves raised a loud scream, but Antar roared like a lion: he slackened the bridle



of his horse—he encountered the first, and pierced him through the chest, driving his spear through his back—he transfixed a second through the mouth, and forced out the weapon at the back of his head—a third he pierced through the right side, and impelled his spear out on the left—and when the other two perceived the effects of his thrusts, they fled to the wilds and the deserts.

Now the occasion of this extraordinary event was as follows: when Shiboob returned from the land of Shiban, and quitted his brother, he launched into the deserts and escaped. Day and night he mourned for his brother, until he reached the country of the tribe of Abs, where he announced the death of Antar. On entering the tents he bared his head and tore off his clothes, raising loud lamentations and screams; and the weeping and the wailing were universal. Shedad rent his garments, and was clamorous in his sorrow and affliction; he threw down his tent, his brother Zakhmetool Jewad did the same, and all their friends and associates; and there was not one but wept bitterly. The same did also the sons of King Zoheir; and they assembled together and came in a body to Shedad, and when he saw them he thus mourned the death of Antar:

“ The affliction is extreme! fixed is it in my heart.  
“ Its intenseness blinds me—Evil is let loose upon  
“ me—Murdered is the hero of the brave, Antar!  
“ Alas! the misery and wretchedness that have fallen  
“ on me. He is gone—how long will my tears flow



“ in sorrow for him ! How long shall I endure this  
“ torture ! O expedition in a luckless hour ! How  
“ fatal was that marriage to him ! Alas ! alas for  
“ him, whose person has vanished from us ; buried  
“ low beneath the earth in the place where he  
“ fought. Let the heavens weep his loss and death  
“ in tears ! May its showers be exhausted for ever !  
“ Let the beauteous stars fall at his fatal end ! Let  
“ the air be darkened, and the sun be eclipsed ! Let  
“ the full moon be veiled also in her station through  
“ grief, and may she ever be involved in obscurity !  
“ Abandoned are the steeds and the camps by the  
“ Absian youth ; his dwelling has forfeited its pos-  
“ sessor. O race of Abs ! ye have lost a chief—  
“ How many were the heroes he slew ! How many  
“ the captives he rescued ! He was the prostrator  
“ of horsemen in the entanglement of spears, and  
“ on the day of battle how many heads laid he low !  
“ He was an intrepid lion in the day of contention—  
“ the smiling, and the stern champion of his tribe.  
“ Woe to the Absians ! now that he is gone, soon  
“ will ye encounter misery ; and the grim-visaged  
“ warriors will plunder ye. Gone is he who pro-  
“ tected the women from the foe ! Hereafter never  
“ will the trampling hostile steeds quit the dwellings ;  
“ he used to fell them down with his sword and  
“ spear, and make them drink cups of death. Noble  
“ and magnanimous was he in every act ; high-  
“ prized was he among men. Oh ! I will weep for  
“ him as long as the west wind blows, in tears that  
“ shall stream and shall moisten the sands.”



Prince Malik repaired to the tents of his father King Zoheir, his tears streaming from his eyes; and as he sobbed aloud, he sent for Shiboob, and made every inquiry of him: O King of Kings, he ended by saying, truly Ibla and her father have brought ill luck on Antar, and the whole tribe of Abs. But when King Zoheir inquired for Malik, Ibla's father (for he wished to speak to him about this affair), he was told that he and his son had been long absent, and none but the women were in the tents. For Prince Malik, and the companions that loved Antar, ever reproached and abused them, saying, Why did ye resolve on exposing the protector of the tribe to an ocean of deaths and dangers? You have now left the Arab hordes to plunder us in every plain and wild; and by the truth of Lat, and Uzza, and the great Hibel\*, every one that comes near us may slay us, and make us drink the odious draughts of death. So Malik, seeing how matters stood, determined to pass some time in roaming about the deserts, and not to remain with his family an object of scorn and disgrace. Accordingly he took with him fifteen horsemen and departed, with the view of gaining some spoil among the Arab tribes. They set out, and traversed the deserts and the sands, until they reached the land of Kenanah, where water failed them, and their thirst became intense. Truly, my son, said Malik to Amroo, thirst grievously afflicts me; gallop on, and descend into yonder valley.

\* Three idols of Arabian idolatry.



Amroo galloped away into an extensive plain, watered with gushing springs. On one side of the valley was a hovel, and at the entrance was a spear fixed in the ground, and a horse ready saddled. He halted, and, as he looked attentively around, there issued forth an old woman, who screamed at the sight of a stranger, exclaiming, What makes thee stop at the dwelling of the outrageous lion, thou son of infamy and disgrace? O mother of horsemen, he replied, I thirst, and I am come hither in quest of water. What people are ye? We are of the tribe of Kenanah, said she, an honourable and trust-worthy race; our habitation is in this spot, for the lion only dwells in his lair. But whilst they were thus conversing, lo! a youth started out of the hovel, and shouted at Amroo. He was a horseman of consummate bravery, and an intrepid hero. His name was Vachid, son of Mesaar, the Kenanian; and being just then displeased with his tribe, he had removed to this place. He stared at Amroo, and seeing him talk with his mother, he became like one frantic. Tell me who thou art? he roared. Amroo's eyes shot fire. Check thy wrath, young man, he replied, for we are of the tribe of the noble Abs, horsemen of destruction and sudden death. Thou son of infamy and disgrace, cried Vachid, to one like me dost thou speak thus? to me whom the lions of the forest dread? Dismount and be humbled, before thou art extended a corpse on the earth. Amroo was highly incensed. But Vachid vaulted on his



steed, snatched up his spear, and drove at him like a lion: he assailed him, and tearing him off his saddle, dashed him down at the door of the hut, roaring and bellowing. The old woman pinioned his shoulders, and Amroo was almost dead.

Now Malik, alarmed at his son's long absence, went in search of him, accompanied by the others, until they came to the valley, where they perceived the flowing streams, and, not far off, the horseman on the back of his steed, and Amroo bound with cords. Alas! my son, exclaimed Malik. His eyes rolled in horror, and he rushed down on Vachid, who received him as the parched ground the first of the rain. He shouted at him, and driving the heel of his spear against his chest, threw him on his back. He immediately plunged into the midst of his companions, and hurled them to the earth; three only were unhurt; and they all delivered themselves up to him, seeing death flash from his eyes. Vachid bound some, and as his mother secured the remainder he thus spoke:

“ When I degrade every horseman in the day of  
“ battle, I defend my wife with my Indian blade.  
“ Noble is the youth that braves every evil, and  
“ knows that man is not eternal; that clads himself  
“ in armour during the meridian heat, and wanders  
“ during the nights and the thick darkness. Ask  
“ the Absians of me, O Amimah! mark my conduct  
“ towards them, and laud the glories of my birth;  
“ I gave them to drink of bitter-flavoured blood



“ with my hand, when they came complaining of  
“ thirst; I cut down the chiefs of the party; blood  
“ gushed from their wounds, and they were strug-  
“ gling with their hands on the ground. Who  
“ refuses such water to those who scour the wilds  
“ where dwell and prowl the dæmons? I am the  
“ night, though I am not black; I am the ocean,  
“ though I do not foam. Kenanah is my tribe, the  
“ door of every virtue; they are noble, high-minded,  
“ and proud; and I have a spirit no other knight  
“ ever attained—I am exalted above the Sun, and  
“ Moon, and the Great Bear.”

Vachid passed that night rejoicing in his triumph over his enemies; but at the dawn of day, being resolved to demand a ransom from his prisoners, lo! fifty horsemen of the tribe of Kenanah joined him, wishing to make peace with him; and he showed them the captive horsemen of Abs; and treating them kindly, he marched back with them, the whole party driving the Absians before them, till they reached their own country, where he was received with great joy. Having pitched his tents, and erected his standards, Vachid reposed that night with his family; but early next day he summoned Malik, son of Carad, and the captive warriors, and demanded of them a heavy ransom in he and she camels, threatening and menacing them with his vengeance. O Arabs, cried Ghayadh, do not ask of us beyond our means, for we are poor Arabs, and the greatest of us all is only master of what his



sword and spear can procure. Know, too, that we only quitted our country from poverty and want; not one of us possesses any he or she camels, I assure you. I know very well, replied Vachid, when the Arabs are taken prisoners and are in difficulty, they always talk after this manner. But by the faith of an Arab, if you do not guarantee to me all your property, and hasten with all your he and she camels, I will bring annihilation down upon ye all; not one of ye will I spare. Whilst Vachid was thus haranguing, up came the old woman, who recognizing Malik among the captives, My son, said she to Vachid, do you mark that prisoner? Yes! he replied. By your existence, she continued, he has a daughter called Ibla, whose equal in form and beauty the heavens do not shadow. Take my advice, demand her in marriage, and release him from bondage. Arab, cried Vachid, addressing Malik, know that I was determined on killing you; but I have just now heard from this old woman that you have a daughter called Ibla, lovely and beautiful; and she has described her charms in the most extravagant manner; I therefore desire you to marry her lawfully to me. Malik, now considering his escape as secure, eagerly replied; Arab, you deserve her more than any one else, but we have in our family a thousand rivals, and they will not permit me to wed her to a stranger. Malik then related to Vachid all that had passed about Antar, and all the extraordinary circumstances that had occurred; how he had exposed



Antar to extreme danger in sending him to procure camels for the marriage dower; how he was assured of his death, and that he was reduced to dust. But there is still another man in the tribe, called Amarah, who loves her; and I fear, continued Malik, he will oppose your pretensions. This is but a juggle, cried Vachid; I shall instantly set you free that you may execute this engagement; but not one of your cousins will I release until your daughter is mine: and beware, for if you are not as good as your word, they shall be laid low headless. Well! said Malik, I will satisfy you. I swear to you, that I will perform every thing I have promised. Let my son Amroo and myself depart; my companions I will leave in bondage. I will only be absent ten days, and if I fail in my word, cut off the heads of my cousins, and make me responsible for their blood, and I will pay their families the compensation-money\*. May God never comfort thee! exclaimed Ghayadh, it is solely on thy account we have fallen into this state of captivity and torture, and our expedition will terminate in the forfeiture of our lives. Cousin, cried Malik, reproach me not; it is to save you that I have promised my child; and my heart consents to abandon my tribe and my brethren merely that I may preserve you and myself. However I will not let Vachid release one of ye till ye engage yourselves most solemnly to keep the whole a secret from

\* Diyet—in those days it amounted to ten camels.



the Absians. Who would be such a fool, exclaimed Ghayadh, as to tell it? Who will venture to confess that one horseman has thus reduced us to disgrace, and has thus tied us up like so many mules? Soon after, Malik and Amroo departed for the tribe of Abs. Vachid followed him three days after, taking with him a troop of noble Arabs; but when they reached the tribe of Abs, they concealed themselves among the rocks, that Malik might have time to visit his daughter and his family. Malik having thus given his hand and contracted the marriage, and imagining that his affairs, though once in a luckless state, were now in proper train, set out for the land of Shurebah and Mount-Saadi; Ghayadh having enjoined him not to delay his return. He and his son Amroo hastened over the hills and the sands; but they did not feel secure until they had reached their country, where, under cover of the night, they skulked among the tents, and found all the families in grief and affliction on account of Antar. Malik repaired to his own tents, near which he perceived a newly-made grave, his daughter sitting by it drowned in tears, in the deepest affliction, and clothed in black. The tears flowed in torrents down her cheeks, and she was tearing the flesh off her wrists with her teeth, and beating her bosom with her hands; and, as she dashed her head against the grave, she addressed it in these words:

“ O grave, my tears shall ever bedew thy earth!  
“ my eyes have renounced sweet sleep! O grave,



“ is there any one but my cousin Antar in thee, or  
“ is his sepulchre in my heart ! Alas, alas for thee !  
“ felled to the ground art thou, and the groans of a  
“ distracted mourner survive. They slew him bar-  
“ barously, and his foes exult when they see my  
“ agony and misery on his account. O, by God !  
“ never will I surrender myself to another, were he  
“ to come with a thousand charms.”

Malik now feeling assured of Antar's death, displayed all his artifice and hypocrisy by expressing his grief and distress ; and, as he entered his wife's apartment, O my cousin, said he, what misfortune is this ? on whose account is all this lamentation and wailing ? Your nephew Antar ! she replied : accounts of his death arrived during your absence ; and there is not an individual in the whole tribe but abuses you ; never will you escape from the perils that surround you. Upon this, Malik made show of still more vehement sorrow ; he rent his clothes, and exclaimed, By the faith of an Arab, we rather deserve their prayers, for many of us are slain, some are now captives, and now that I am returned, I find you in this afflicted state. Never can we deliver ourselves from these troubles but by emigrating. He then repaired to his daughter, and kissing her head, My child, said he, let not this sad affair prey upon thy mind, moderate thy grief and distress : and whilst he pitied her, she blushed for him. She sprang up from the tomb, and starting off from him, Away ! she cried, no one slew my



cousin but thou ; thou wast the man that exposed him to an ocean of perils ; truly will thy treachery soon share the evils thy arm has brought on him. Her father made no reply, but hastened to the tents of Shedad ; and as he drew nigh, he heard Shedad sobbing and sighing, and in tears, thus giving vent to his sorrow :

“ O my eyelids, let your tears flow abundantly,  
“ weep for the generous, noble horseman ; a knight  
“ in whom I took refuge when my efforts failed, at  
“ my up-risings and my down-sittings. My brother  
“ exposed him to a sea of death in his malice, and  
“ the hearts of the envious exult. He planned his  
“ murder, and he has abandoned me. No more  
“ will my honour and my engagements be respected.  
“ He behaved cruelly to him in exacting the marriage dower, and he now refuses to do him justice.  
“ *He* was the drawn sword of the race of Abs,  
“ cleaving through armour above the skin. *He*  
“ used to fell the foe in every land, till the warriors  
“ cried out for succour. Prostrate, fallen, bowed  
“ to the earth is *he* now, beneath the shadow of  
“ lances and the waving of banners. Now *he* is  
“ gone, the Absian dames are in sorrow, dashing  
“ their hands against their cheeks in fear of slavery ;  
“ dishevelled is their hair, streaming are their tears  
“ over their fair necks decorated with chains ; sigh-  
“ ing they mourn the hero of Abs in sobs of sorrow,  
“ that give pleasure to the envious. Grieve they  
“ must ever in tears from their eyes for him who



“ was the illustrious knight. May God destroy  
“ Malik, son of Carad, and make him suffer what  
“ the tribe of Themood endured !”

Having listened to this lament, Malik entered : he tore off his garments, and renewed his sighs and his tears. Indeed, my brother, said he, we also require your prayers. And he attempted to kiss him ; but Shedad turned away from him. Away with this deceit and hypocrisy, said he. Who but you sent my son to Irak ? But there are who will demand his blood at your hands, and will requite you for his death. Malik shrunk away, and hot coals were burning in his heart, as he sought for pretexts to cover his guilt. He laid not down that night before he told his wife what had happened to him in his expedition ; how he had betrothed his daughter, and had by her means rescued his life and soul ; but that his cousins were still detained as hostages ; and how he had engaged them to keep the whole affair a secret. Upon this they resolved on emigrating, and Malik concealed himself, on account of his companions whom he had left in captivity, and lest Amarah or Rebia, on hearing what he was doing, might mar his project ; for these were again bent on their former plans, the moment they heard that Antar had fallen. Amarah indeed was in ecstasies, and whispered to himself, “ now then will Ibla be mine.” So taking with him Oorwah, son of Wird, and ten other horsemen, he departed on a plundering expedition for a marriage dower, from



the land of Yemen. Malik no sooner heard of Amarah's departure, than he made his preparations for migrating. But the three days had scarcely elapsed, when a slave arrived from Vachid, to inform him that his master was already at the springs of Zeba, accompanied by forty horsemen, concealed hard by. Return ! said Malik, return to him, and tell him we are on our way. And at night Malik struck his tents, and loaded the camels. What means this ? inquired Ibla. Whither, my father, are you going ? We cannot possibly remain here any longer, replied Malik, for the very stones cry out against us, and all the families are convinced that you and I were alone the cause of Antar's destruction ; but I swear by the life of your eyes, that I only despatched him for these Asafeer camels in order to raise your dignity amongst the high and low, and now our relations consider us as enemies. It is my wish, therefore, to absent myself until this is somewhat blown over, and then we will return again home ; but should we remain long here, Amarah will come and demand you in marriage ; you do not like him, and I have no excuse by which I can elude his pretensions ; besides, I cannot ever force you to a marriage with any one, not the object of your choice. No one but Antar can my heart ever love, said Ibla ; and, moreover, what can that wretch Amarah do ? And thus she recited :

“ O heart, be patient under the agonies I endure.  
“ But how can my tears cease to flow ! no balm is



“ there to soothe them. How can my tears be  
“ soothed away! ever must they flow for the loss of  
“ him who shamed the brilliancy of the loveliest.  
“ High exalted are his glory and his exploits: noble  
“ is his birth, permanent in the pinnacle of honour.  
“ He who dwells in every life, he, the eternal  
“ Cupbearer, has made him drink of the cups of  
“ death. Oh! I shall weep for him for ever, as  
“ long as the dove pours forth its lament on the  
“ boughs and the leaves. O Aboolfawaris! I have  
“ not a breath of life remaining: Oh! then, how  
“ can I be patient under my transports and my  
“ passion?”

Her sorrows burst forth anew, but her father regarded her not. About midnight they departed, traversing rocks and deserts, and before morning they had quitted the country. When King Zoheir heard of it, Wherever he goes, may death overtake him! said he. God grant he may never return, and never be seen or heard of more! How diabolical are his malice and hypocrisy! how detestable his art and deceit! By the faith of an Arab, had we not been related, I would have ordered him to be put to death, before he could have escaped. But wherever he goes, his punishment will overtake him for his conduct to Antar.

In the mean time, Malik travelled on till he reached the Springs of Zeba, where Vachid was concealed with his prisoners; their feet bare, their bodies naked, and their heads uncovered: misery



and disgrace were their lot. At day-break arrived Malik, with his loaded camels, and slaves, and all his property. His male slaves led the camels. Ibla was mounted on a howdah, and many attendants walked by her side. Vachid, the moment he saw the cavalcade, recognized them: he sprang out of his concealment; he slackened his bridle, and grasped his spear, followed by his horsemen; and when they came close to Malik, they saluted him, who, in answer to their inquiries, told them what had passed. Salute your spouse, he added. I have faithfully brought you the object of your wishes. Soothe her heart, and then, perhaps, she will return your affection; and if you request any thing of her, she will not refuse you. Ibla was seized with horror at hearing these words. Who are these people? cried she; whom is my father addressing with so much respect? who is this horseman? O my sister, replied Amroo, we owe him our lives: he had taken us prisoners, but has released us out of regard for you; and we have married you to him. He is your husband, and your protector; and it is our intention to make his country our home; for he is a man of honour, and he is one of the Chiefs of the tribe of Kenanah. He then informed her of their imprisonment and distresses; and that some were even detained in captivity as hostages for her marriage. We, he continued, are bound to him by solemn engagements, and now we have fulfilled his wishes. Ibla's agony was severe indeed: she



tore off her garments, and screamed in the fulness of her grief, hopeless of rescue. Who is he that demands me in marriage of you? she cried. The die is cast, he replied; receive him—deny him not; he has not his equal—no one is to be compared to him. And as he was about to return to the horsemen, Ibla flung herself on the ground, weeping and sobbing. She cast the sand over her head, exclaiming, Alas, O Antar! may God destroy him who destroyed thee! Now thou art gone, how infinite is my misery. O by the Arabs! O for that high-minded Chief! O for that renowned hero! And in the midst of her tears and sighs she thus complained:

“Copiously flow my tears; disease arises in my  
“frame; a fire is kindled in my bowels and my  
“liver. No support have I against my afflictions.  
“I have lost all patience, and anguish consumes  
“my body. Is there any hope for me in my  
“agonies, now that fortune has betrayed me in the  
“hero of the Battle of Lions—the cleaver of skulls,  
“and of ribs, and of armour—the scatterer of hos-  
“tile armies over the universe? Flow then, my  
“tears, in grief for him; increase, that I may see  
“my tears moisten every spot of rust. Mayst  
“thou, O Wild Beast, be drowned in the water of  
“my tears! O my tears, never be ye exhausted;  
“ever be ye multiplied. My dishonour in the  
“deserts shall never be accomplished by my con-



“sent. But patience! never, never more will I  
“complain to any one.”

Whilst Ibla was thus speaking, Vachid stood gazing at what God had given her of beauty and loveliness; and his heart was pierced by the arrows of her glances. Her brother would have beaten her, and driven her back to the howdah; but Vachid kept him off, for he began to pity her. Keep off, he cried, for truly her heart is overcharged with affliction; her distress and sorrow are great. Have patience with me till we reach home, continued he, addressing Ibla in a softened tone; I will appoint slave-girls and free-born women to attend on thee. And he attempted to kiss her between the eyes, and raise her into the howdah. But she struck him violently on the chest, and threw him on his back. Avaunt, she exclaimed, thou vilest of Arabs! basest of all that ever struck a tent-peg in the desert: thy marriage with thine own mother is nearer at hand than with me. Begone: never mayst thou be respected! never protected! When her father and brother heard these words, they stood abashed in the presence of Vachid. Amroo ran towards her, and, raising his arm, with a stick beat her over the shoulders, saying, Is it in such terms you receive your husband? he is indeed a noble Chief. And he drew forth his sword, and beat her with the flat part of it. Paralysed be thy hand! stiffened be thy limbs and joints! thou foulest of men,



exclaimed Ibla, sighing deeply. Strike me dead at once, if thou art a horseman, and put off the garments of infamy and disgrace; for truly thou art degraded among the Arabs in every plain. Ye have all been taken prisoners by these horsemen, and have ransomed your lives by a shameful bargain, sacrificing a poor girl, helpless and ignorant. May God pour down on you all the miseries of the age! At this her brother was still more exasperated; and he beat her with his whip till he made the blood flow. He then replaced her in the howdah. Mind not what she says, said he to Vachid, who also mounted his horse, and led her camel by the bridle. But the prisoners being released, set off on their way home. Ibla, in the mean time, made the plains re-echo to her shrieks; and Vachid thought he should never reach his tents: whilst Ibla continually called on the name of Antar, looking out to the right and to the left, and weeping till evening came over them; and she remained three days without food or sleep. On the fourth day she was quite exhausted by hunger and watching, and excess of grief. Often did she invoke her father and her brother, exclaiming, O God, send down enemies upon them, and dreadful calamities. Thus she continued, till one morning a great dust arose, and darkened the land; when lo! there appeared thirty slaves like eagles, and they came down like voracious hawks. They no sooner marked the howdah, and the party with their camels, than they



fixed their spears and let go their bridles, whilst their Chief directed himself towards the howdah, crying out, Oh what a glorious morning! I am the Nocturnal Evil, and the Depredator of the Age. Now this slave was called Abooddegi, son of Nabih the Kelbian, born in some of the corners of Yemen, of a tribe named the tribe of Riyan. His constant practice was to carry off the Arab maidens: he acknowledged no protection, and made no distinction between right and wrong. He only stayed three days in one country, during which time he overwhelmed it with blood and massacres; for he was one of the prodigies of the time. The maiden whom he made captive he kept for three days to himself, and then consigned her to his slaves, who, when they had glutted their barbarity, seized all she had, murdered her, roasted her, and devoured her. They afterwards departed for another country. Such was their usual conduct towards the women of Arabia; and their leader was surnamed the Nocturnal Evil, the Depredator of the Age. As soon as he beheld Ibla, and the horsemen of Kenanah, he darted towards her, followed by his slaves like black eagles. Vachid stared; his eyes became like burning coals. Remain with your daughter's howdah, said he to Malik: tell her to mark my deeds in the field of battle: long have I wished to meet this warrior. He galloped away, grasping his spear, and assaulted the slave in the boldest style. But he found him a tempestuous sea. The contest became general;



warriors attacked warriors, and horsemen encountered each other. Steel clashed against steel, and the close and the distant met. Vachid fiercely engaged the Chief, and a furious conflict ensued. Vachid, fearing Malik would regard him with the eye of inferiority, exposed himself to every peril: he exerted every energy to attain victory and glory: he poured down his thrusts with the utmost vehemence, and he imagined his enemy must fall beneath his blows. But his hopes were unavailing; for the slave at length struck Vachid's lance, and made it shiver into four pieces: he pierced him in the chest, and forced his spear out behind his back. Vachid fell prostrate on the earth. When Ibla's father beheld this frightful accident, rage and indignation possessed him; and exclaiming to Ibla, Ah! what a wretch art thou! he and his son mounted, wishing to keep off the Nocturnal Evil from the women. But they were seized with the greatest horrors. The slave shouted at Malik in a voice like a peal of thunder; and quickly turning round his spear, he struck him with the butt end—overthrowing him, and nearly killing him: he then drove at Amroo, his eyes rolling like burning coals. Amroo delivered himself up without difficulty, crying out, Young man, may God preserve thee! Pity thy prisoner! take the women and the families; but spare us the terrors of the combat. So the slave pinioned him, and tied down his arms; and having treated Malik in the same manner, he



sprang on his horse to assist his companions. Ibla rejoiced over her family, and her sorrows were relieved: but the unhappy girl was distracted, not knowing what to do, so overcome was she by fears and terrors: but whilst she was conversing with her mother upon this subject, Wretched woman, exclaimed Malik to his wife, come to me, and unbind me, for I am nearly dead. Let us mount these scattered horses; let each of us take one; and let us escape. His wife accordingly alighted, and unbound him. Ibla did the same for her brother. Malik and Amroo mounted two horses; and taking each a female behind him, they sought the wilds and the plains, considering themselves now beyond every danger. In the mean time the slaves were employed in combating the Kenanians. But Malik and the rest were traversing the rocks and deserts, happy in their deliverance from the enemy, when on a sudden there appeared ten horsemen like eagles, preceded by a string of camels, which they were goading on with the spikes of their lances.

Now these were horsemen of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, headed by Amarah and Oorwah, who were returning from their expedition into the land of Yemen, exulting and victorious. Amarah's sole anxiety was to reach home, that he might again set eyes on Ibla's face. At that moment he heard Malik's shouts: he immediately advanced; and as they came nigh they recognized each other. Amarah dismounted, and hailed Malik and Amroo, who



were in such fright and alarm they with difficulty discovered their friends. Amarah gazed at the brilliant Ibla, and lo ! her complexion and her face turned from a bright red to a deadly pale. He was amazed. What means all this, my cousins ? said he. O Amarah ! replied Malik, hasten to your prize : hurry over the plains before the troop of horsemen overtake us, and you fall into the misery and distress into which we also fell. Malik now recounted his adventures : how he had betrothed his daughter to Vachid, and what had occurred on the journey. He also described the slave and Vachid, and their intrepid conduct, so forcibly, that when he finished his narrative, an universal trembling seized Amarah and Oorwah. Just at that moment arose a great dust ; loud shouts struck them ; and lo ! the blacks rushed on them—the terrible slave at their head, roaring out, Whither, ye dogs, have ye escaped ? Behind ye, close, is the Nocturnal Evil, and the Depredator of the Age ! Having secured Malik and Amroo with cords, he went to aid his comrades, and attacked the people of Kenanah, who amounted to forty horsemen, as we before stated. It was not even mid-day when he had slain thirty-five of them, and hurled them to destruction. The other five escaped over the plain by the speed of their horses. After this the victors turned back in quest of the howdah, but they found no one in it ; for their prisoners had fled. The slave galloped in pursuit of them, and sent forth a shriek that would



have split a rock; for he was in the fiercest agony of rage. He hastened after the fugitives, followed by his companions, till they perceived the party; who no sooner discovered them, than they were horror-struck. O my cousin, said they to Oorwah, the slaves have overtaken us; and the Nocturnal Evil and the Depredator of the Age is at their head. Let us turn upon them: let us die like brave men: let us not live like cowards. Amarah, O Amarah, cried Ibla, this is the moment for energy and exertion. He who once opposed you on my account is dead, and crushed to the earth: had he, indeed, been alive, never should I have been a captive in the hands of enemies: greatly would it have grieved him to have seen me in this state of distress. In short, there is now no one but thee to assist me. Exhibit before me this day a proof of thy bravery, of which thou boastest so much: let me see how thou canst fight these black slaves. At these words, all the pride of an Arab sprang into the heart of Amarah; death itself appeared indifferent to him. By the life of thine eyes, O thou joy of my heart, O thou dispeller of my sorrows, replied he, this day will I exhibit before thee all my prowess in its true blaze; and thou shalt learn that all I have said of myself is true. So he summoned up his courage, adjusted himself properly, tucked up his skirts, twirled his whiskers, and folded up his hair under his turban, drawing it off from his shoulders. He then pulled forth his spear, and set out on a full gallop, exclaiming,



This assault, O Ibla, is for thy bright eyes; and he went off among the foremost, accompanied by Oorwah, who cried out, Do you look out on the right, I will to the left. But Amarah recited these verses:

“ To-day I will exhibit my prowess and my  
“ courage: the warriors and the horsemen shall  
“ stand in awe of me. I will plunge into a sea of  
“ blood, in quest of glory, and the heroes shall  
“ behold my impetuosity and my thrusts. Ibla  
“ shall mark the deeds of a ferocious lion. Now  
“ that it is all over with that infernal black, I shall  
“ be glorified among the Arabs, and they shall  
“ acknowledge my valour in the field of battle.”

Amarah had not finished his speech, when one of the slaves gave him a blow that upset him, and laid him sprawling on the ground. Abooddegi attacked Oorwah, and shouted at him in a voice like thunder: his assault was that of an eagle; and a vigorous contest ensued, would turn an infant grey. Abooddegi darted close up to him, so that their stirrups grated: he seized Oorwah by the breast-plate, and, dragging him towards him, wrenched him out of his saddle, and held him suspended in his hand. Dismounting, he pinioned him, and bound his arms tight. The conflict continued till the sun turned pale; and the slaves having slain all that remained of the Absians, the Nocturnal Evil hastened up to Ibla's father and his son, and, wounding them severely, threw them on the ground. He reposed in that spot for the night, with his slaves and prisoners; but at day-



break they departed : Ibla ever in tears and grief, and the men tied on the backs of the horses, plunged in infamy and disgrace. Do not be so distressed, said the Nocturnal Evil, to calm their sorrows ; rather rejoice in your safety. I shall not demand of you money or camels : but whoever has a beautiful daughter or sister, let him send her to me for three days and nights. Then will I set him at liberty. But whoever does not consent to these my terms, will instantly be my victim. Hast thou ever, O my cousin, said Amarah to Oorwah (for Amarah was bound by his side, stripped and exposed), hast ever heard of a more iniquitous fellow than this base slave ? Thou, indeed, wilt be able to escape : Malik, also, and Amroo : they will all get well out of this scrape. But I, poor I, must die under stripes and tortures. How so, thou foul mustachioed fellow ? cried Oorwah. Oh ! continued Amarah, you will give him your lovely sister Selma, and Malik will surrender that woman of women, Ibla ; and the unhappy Amarah will die in misery and wretchedness. I am sure there will be no occasion to touch me once with a sword or a spear ; for were I but to see him alone with Ibla, my death and dissolution would be instantaneous : indeed, I should expire of anguish. Ibla cannot be otherwise than of ill omen to him, said Oorwah, as she has already been to others before him. To whomsoever she is affianced, his mother will weep and mourn for him. Whoever takes her will forfeit his property, and have his throat cut. You have



observed how we travelled over hills and dales, and how we obtained these camels; but as soon as we beheld *her* face, misfortunes were let loose on us, and miseries came down upon us. Whilst this was passing between Amarah and Oorwah, the Nocturnal Evil sent on before him five slaves; and consigning over to their care Ibla's howdah, Hasten, said he, to the spot of Zatool Menahil; pitch our tents there; for there I intend to remain three days with this lovely damsel. After which, mark what I will do to these wretches when I have taken away their property, and received their ransom. The slaves rode forward, and Antar met them, as we have already described: some of them he slew; the rest he put to flight. Antar was now wholly wrapped up in Ibla, frequently asking after her health; for misery had impaired her charms. She was bewildered at the sight of her beloved: her tears flowed profusely. At last recovering, she thus addressed him:

“ All my misery—all my grief is past, now that  
“ we have met after so long an absence. Time  
“ now happily announces the existence of one who  
“ had been trampled beneath the dumb grave.  
“ Now the eyes of the age are illumined, after a  
“ period of darkness, and I am returned to life  
“ after my death. O Knight of men and Genii!  
“ O thou that excellest every warrior in glory!  
“ my eyes gladden at beholding thy liberality, and  
“ the beauty of thy truth. I will implore God ever  
“ to exalt thy glories, both morning and evening.”



She concluded by relating to Antar what had happened to her with the foul slave and Vachid: how the latter had taken her father and brother prisoners, and how they had ransomed themselves by sacrificing her. As Antar listened, he wept. In return, he detailed to her the horrors he had undergone: what had happened to him with Chosroe, and all that had passed in Persia: how he had extricated himself from his troubles: and he described the riches he had brought with him. Now her soul seemed to revive after death. O my cousin, said she, by my life that is in thy heart, bear me away, and return to the nation that has loaded thee with favours. Leave my father and brother with this adulterous slave; let him treat them as he pleases: return no more to the tribe of Abs. Antar smiled at her expressions of love, and rejoiced in her faith and constancy. Hail to all that can give thee pleasure, he replied; dismiss from thy mind whatever can pain thee; for by the life of thine eyes and the black of thine eye brows, I will subdue all the world for thee. I will make thee supreme over the high and low. Then calling to his attendants, whom he ordered to halt there, Protect my cousin, said he, the mistress of all this wealth. This day I will give you the joyous spectacle of the destruction of her enemies. And he advanced to meet the horsemen. The Nocturnal Evil was following fast his companions, whom he had sent forward to pitch his tents; and so happy was he, he thought he should never arrive; when



lo! two of his slaves came towards him at a full gallop, not daring even to look behind them. What has befallen you in this desert? he exclaimed: where are my Absian damsel, and your other comrades? Our comrades, they replied, are already a prey to the birds and the eagles. But a black, not even like a negro, has taken possession of your maiden. His look terrifies the senses: his face is that of a Ghoul. When he strikes a skull, he cleaves it; when he thrusts at a horseman, he annihilates him. He hears not what any one says; to no human being does he deign to reply. His thrust is his address; his blow is his answer. At hearing this, Abooddegi hissed like a serpent; he 'roared and bellowed, Does one like me fear man, dæmon, genii, or the devil? and he instantly gave the rein to his steed; and, poising his spear, he departed, in order to clear up this mystery; and as he pursued his way, he thus exclaimed:

“ Were I afraid of the conflict of man, I should  
“ not be called the Nocturnal Depredator. How  
“ can I fear man or genii, I, who have a heart  
“ harder than mountain rock? I dwell alone in  
“ the wilds and the wastes, to chase the lions, the  
“ inhabitants of gloomy haunts. How many nights  
“ have I passed where the Ghouls watch with me,  
“ and tremble at my shadow! How many horse-  
“ men have I left felled to the earth, gnawing their  
“ right hands and their left! Faith has no charms  
“ for me; no pleasure has a guest in my favours.



“ To break a piece of bread is even hard to me, as  
“ I fear my evening repast may be but scanty.  
“ I have no connexion with men, and they evince  
“ their enmity to me on that account throughout  
“ the world. I have no protection among man, for  
“ treachery is the sole rule of my conduct. No  
“ relative have I but my spear and my sword;  
“ those two in the contest are my paternal and  
“ maternal uncle. On the back of a steed was I  
“ born by night. How then shall I fear nocturnal  
“ calamities !”

He continued his course over the plains till he met Antar the valiant lion. Who art thou, he cried, that hast slain my companions, and hast seized my Asbian maid ? To-day thou shalt die ; to-day thou shalt fall into annihilation ! Thou dastard—thou offspring of an uncircumcised race, exclaimed Antar, since when has Ibla been thy slave ? By God, thou foul Arab, had it not been for my absence in quest of a marriage dower for her, thou wouldst have waited long for such an opportunity. Away with thee ! thy success is but a dream. Heroes have turned grey for her ; and every one, on foot or on horseback be he, has failed in his attempts on her. Come on : let us to the field this instant. Now to the battle of swords ; and know, that this will be the most inauspicious of days for thee. Antar immediately assailed him : he galloped and charged with him, and commenced the conflict. As soon as Ibla’s father beheld Antar in full con-



test with their common foe, Protector of Abs and Adnan, he cried, release us from this dæmon: make him drink of death, nephew! for he is a perfidious wretch; and hadst thou not arrived thus opportunely, Ibla would have been rendered infamous among the Arabs for ever. O that thou hadst never been born, nor Ibla either! exclaimed Oorwah; for she brings ill luck on every one that seeks her. By Heaven, said Amarah, she is not too dearly purchased by the loss of lives or the sacrifice of souls, or by the cleaving of skulls and heads. This misery, this disgrace we endure, are all on her account. But still never, oh never! shall I be able to command one embrace or one kiss. Yet I think it is only on account of this black slave that she is so obdurate. Whilst they were conversing, Antar was engaging his antagonist; and a battle ensued between them that would have daunted the boldest warriors. And they continued the combat until Antar, observing his adversary flag, pressed on him, wearied him, and terrified him; then, extending his spear, pierced him between the breasts, and forced the barb out through his shoulders, crying out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! I am ever the lover of Ibla! He hastened towards the captives, and liberated them, expressing his delight at meeting his uncle Malik. Rejoice at this deliverance from death, he exclaimed, but know that all your late sufferings are only a just punishment for your past conduct. You promised your



daughter to me hypocritically and deceitfully : you despatched me to the land of Irak in search of her dower, and you exposed me to a sea of perils and dangers. In the meantime, you affianced her to a horseman of Kenanah : but God has at last rewarded your treachery and insult. Do not reproach me, dear nephew, replied Malik ; your brother Shiboob returned home, and, announcing your death, deprived us of every hope of seeing you again. And Malik recounted all their adventures, from the return of Shiboob to the encounter at Zatoul-Menahil.

O Aboolfawaris ! exclaimed Amarah, every one gains his own in time. Praise be to God that you came off victorious, and thus saved us from death. Antar thanked him, and conducted them to his tents, where they halted ; and as they beheld his countless profusion of wealth and jewels, their minds were stupefied, their eyes were scared, and their senses bewildered. Nephew, said Malik, whence is all this property, this wealth, these tents, and these pavilions ? doubtless some of the noble Kings of the land have stopped here. Uncle, replied Antar, all this wealth belongs to your slave, Antar. You demanded of me a thousand Asafeer camels ; I have brought them loaded, by the great King their owner, with gold and money. Having conducted them to the tents, he ordered his slaves to slay camels and sheep, and to prepare a feast ; whilst he sat down to relate to them all his adven-



tures in Irak and with Nushirvan, and described all the honours and dignities he had received. But when the slaves advanced to attend on Antar, he ordered them to offer their services to his illustrious Chiefs. Antar soon after rejoined Ibla, inquiring after her health, and sympathising in her sufferings. He kissed her between the eyes: she threw herself into his arms, and kissed his face and cheeks. Rejoice in these riches, said he tenderly to her; such a sight, my cousin, regales the eye, and enlivens the heart and soul. Mark, too, these female slaves, that resemble moons, and this silver litter, studded with costly jewels; and rule me as thou wilt, night and day. Truly the great King has enriched me with this crown of jewels, which no human being has as yet touched. Verily, replied Ibla, your safety is more acceptable to me than all you have described: no pleasure have I felt but in your presence. Antar smiled, and his bosom expanded with joy at the purity of her love. He quitted her, having first stationed a guard over her, fearful of any accident. And Antar's enemies reposed that night under the protection of Antar, conversing about his good fortune and exalted honours. Well! said Amroo to his father, I can no longer remain with the tribe of Abs; I shall set out for the land of Yemen. I shall migrate; for I have not an eye to look on this black slave, who even presumes to take possession of Ibla—that full moon. What can a man do, added Malik, when his projects are



thus thwarted? Could the God of heaven in his wrath be more adverse to him, when I exposed him to those oceans of perils? but he has escaped from them all, and has, moreover, brought with him all this wealth, and these precious ladings. Know, my son, when we reach home, every one will love Antar, and hate us; for you observed their behaviour to us when they heard he was dead. Amroo, said Oorwah, if Antar reaches the tribe of Abs and Adnan, he will rule over it, and depose King Zoheir: he will exalt himself to his station; the clans, too, will obey and follow him. The greatest Kings cannot produce such wealth. When Amarah heard this, he wept in excess of envy and misery. Disgraced, dishonoured, is the family of Zeead, O my cousins, he cried; verily my gall is bursting at this vile black slave, whom fortune favours. By the truth of our idols, should he enter unto Ibla, I shall expire of anguish. Oh that the Nocturnal Evil of the Age had sacrificed me as a sheep, so that I had never beheld this vile wretch return in safety. And he wept till morning, and there was not one of the party that slept or felt at ease, so intense were their jealousy and hatred. At daylight, Antar ordered the slaves to prepare for departure and load the camels. Six hundred was the number of his blacks, all headed by Aboolmout, and he was a bold intrepid horseman. When the mules and camels were loaded, and the female slaves were mounted on them, Grecians, Persians, Cophts,



Georgians, and Franks, Antar presented to Ibla three variegated robes, studded with the precious metals and jewels: he clothed her in them, and placed on her head the diadem that the King of Persia had given him. He also ordered forth for her the magnificent silver litter, the supports of which were of burnished gold; and eight mules were required to carry it. At the sight of this mass of splendour, Ibla was stupefied and amazed. Her father Malik, as he surveyed it, was in the greatest consternation and surprise: but as to her mother, her tongue was tied up in her mouth, so vast was her astonishment. Amarah! he wept, and sighed, and groaned, and moaned. Antar cared not for any of them, so entirely was he devoted to Ibla; producing articles after articles in succession, till she was bewildered. He raised her into the litter, with her mother, and he commanded the slaves to march forward, and to attend to them on the journey. When Ibla was seated in the litter, her countenance became radiant and illumined: she smiled in the loveliest manner. Every charm was heightened; and from her eyelashes she shot arrows that penetrated the slayer of men and heroes. Again Amarah cast his eyes upon her: he was confounded. His rage became more intense: the fiercest anguish and torture seized him. Alas, O Amarah! said he to himself, from this moment thou art indeed a wretch—a lost man. Now Antar delivered Ibla over to her father, saying, Receive



your daughter and her property. Malik was profuse in his praises and expressions of admiration, exhibiting outwardly the reverse of what was in his mind. Nephew, he replied, from this day Ibla is your handmaid, and her father and her brother are numbered among your slaves. Upon this, Antar advanced, and kissed his uncle's hand, and paid him every possible respect. Thus they continued, till between them and the tribe of Abs there remained only one day's journey; when, on inquiring for Amarah, he was not to be found. I imagine, said Malik, Amarah is gone on before us, to announce our arrival. No, no, said Antar, I am not in such favour with Amarah, that he should do such an act; but if it be true, King Zoheir will come out with all his family to meet us. Well, said Malik, I will precede you, and congratulate the tribe on your arrival; and I shall thus conciliate your father and your uncles. It is your own affair, added Antar; do as you please. Malik accordingly changed his horse, and set off, mounted on one of Antar's noble steeds, with his son Amroo, and Oorwah, and Ibla's mother; and all those whose envy was consuming their bodies and souls. Travelling with great speed, they arrived early the next day in the land of the tribe of Abs. Malik immediately repaired to the habitations of Shedad, crying out, Good news, good luck to ye, O family of Carad! Antar, son of Shedad, is returned. Shedad looked up: Do you indeed speak



the truth, O Malik? he asked. Yes, by the Ruler of empires, replied Malik. They all started up, and mounted their horses. They were soon scattered about; they seemed like a torrent, all exclaiming, Welcome, joy! begone, sorrow! and they sallied forth to meet Antar. The news soon reached King Zoheir. Well! said he, this is the most wonderful of all events: it must be noted down, and written, as unheard of amidst the Arabs or the Persians. By the truth of Lat, and Uzza, and Hibel\*, we must all go and meet him, and twitch the noses of his enemies, and rejoice the hearts of his friends. So he went forth, accompanied by his sons, and the whole tribe of illustrious Arabs. Antar, having separated from his uncle, stayed behind till near midnight; when he set out, conversing with Ibla, the most beautiful of human beings, and feasting himself with looking on her until it was daylight; when, riding close to her, O my cousin, said he, know that your father is gone forward to announce our approach, and to tell King Zoheir to come out and meet us. I wish, also, to precede you, and to meet them nearer home; for I now feel secure about you against all the treacheries of fortune, and the calamities of night. Having then given orders to some slaves to protect her, and to keep off the road, fearing that the dust of the horses might

\* Three idols of the Arabian idolatry.



molest her, he departed, and the whole earth was too confined for him in the expansion of his love and joy. He travelled on till mid-day, when lo! a great dust arose, and the horsemen of Abs and Adnan advanced: before them marched the slaves, flourishing their swords, and damsels playing on cymbals, and the standards floated over their heads. First was seen King Zoheir, like a lion starting from his den, and over his head waved the eagle banner. The instant Antar beheld him, he dismounted from Abjer, and the delight of this meeting made him forget all his past troubles: and as they drew nigh, they expressed their satisfaction in one acclaim. Oh what a glorious day! was the universal shout. Antar stood before the King, kissed his hand, and prayed for his eternal glory and happiness. And as he advanced towards Prince Malik, he thus exclaimed:

“ The age has removed its vizer from that radiant form, glorious in perfect brilliancy, sparkling in splendour; so that darkness is illumined by it; like an hitherto unseen youth, glowing in beauty, moving towards sublimity in matchless lustre, and dashing to the earth all that would rival him, like birds shot by the arrow of the archer. Victory has firmly linked its banners to his stirrups, to fell all thy foes with the waving spear—O thou phoenix of this age! thou illustrious hero of the period! thou attainer of all glory!”

O Aboolfawaris, exclaimed Prince Malik, may



God curse the world when thou art gone ! And he besought him to mount his horse. The noble Ab-sians all surrounded him, whilst in reply to King Zoheir's inquiries, he related his adventures. His mother and his brothers wept, and sobbed, and clamoured at the ecstasy of meeting, and in the excess of their happiness after all their past alarms and afflictions. When Antar had spoken to them all, his slaves arrived conducting the camels, headed by the fierce Aboolmout, who in front of the blacks galloped round them to the right and to the left. The whole land was involved in dust. In the rear came Ibla's litter, all of silver studded with precious stones ; before her marched the imperial steeds and beauteous slaves like the Houris of Paradise, encompassing the lovely full-moon of Majesty, as she approached. Antar dismounted from Abjer, and girded his loins with a zone of gold brocade worth a hundred thousand dirhems. He directed the slaves to lead aside some camels and mules that were laden with wealth, and also ten fine coursers of unrivalled beauty, with their chests and baggage, and presented them to King Zoheir ; and kissing the ground before him, he begged his acceptance of them. The King received them, and before each chest stood a slave-girl, either Grecian or Abyssinian. To all the horsemen he distributed robes and money, and gave them slaves and youths, so that there was not one but partook of Antar's bounty. King Zoheir was amazed and in the



greatest astonishment at the quantity of goods. By the truth of the holy Kabaa, said he, Antar must have completely impoverished the King of Persia; and he desired all the Absians, to whom Antar had given something, to make a suitable return. To his father Shedad he presented abundance of silver and gold, and many stout slaves; but the remainder with the Asafeer camels he delivered to Malik, his uncle. Thus they separated, and every one sought his own tent. But Amroo, Ibla's brother, made the camels that conveyed his sister kneel down—he lifted up the curtain of the litter—but Ibla was not there!—

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